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# **Faith, Volunteering and Holiday Hunger: Questioning Action and Persistence through Affect Theory**

**Stephanie Denning**

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements for award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Human Geography in the Faculty of Social Science and Law, School of Geographical Sciences, February 2018.

WORD COUNT 94,659 words

## Abstract

UK food poverty has reached unprecedented levels, and faith groups are playing a crucial role in responding to it. How are people motivated by their faith to respond to food poverty, and how do they persist in volunteering? This is important to understand if projects relying upon volunteers are to be sustainable.

I explore volunteers' motivations and persistence in action through affective geographies within non-representational theories. From Spinoza, an affect operates between bodies and is about the power of a body to act, whilst an affection is about the state of a body and the impact of an affect upon a body. This research's focus on faith-based social action contributes to two key themes in the geography of religion: understanding faith as performed in people's lives, and questioning the role of faith in society.

Using action research and participatory methodologies, over twenty months I established and ran a MakeLunch project in a church. MakeLunch is a national Christian charity whose projects respond to children's holiday hunger by providing free lunches. It is through my own and volunteers' narratives that I explore how faith motivates action, and how we persisted in volunteering.

I conclude that volunteers' faith was significant in motivating volunteering, but motivations must be continually re-ignited to avoid in-action. Three contributions follow. First, through affect theory, research can go beyond understanding faith as a social construct by highlighting how by virtue of their faith, volunteering can hold more meaning than what is represented in action. Secondly, from the conceptual emphasis on affection, nuances of reflecting can be discerned and the role of will challenged because volunteers are changed by affections, which in turn affects their future actions. Thirdly, the combination of affect and affection portrays how there is a continual cycle of motivation, action and reflection in volunteers' persistence.

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Finally, I would like to thank all in Browns, friends and family for their support and encouragement as well as those who helped to proof read this work.

## **Author's declaration**

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

During the research period the author undertook a three month placement with the Performance, Development and Insight team at Christian Aid. As part of the placement the author wrote a literature review on volunteering which overlaps in places with the content of this thesis, particularly Chapter One.

SIGNED: ..... DATE:.....

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## Preface

This research officially began in September 2014 with an ESRC PhD studentship. However, my motivation and the background for this research began some years before this. First, I grew up as a Christian in an Anglican Church of England church. As a teenager I was keen to follow a career that would make a meaningful difference in people's lives. Being Christian was an important part of my teenage identity, and church activities and worship formed a significant part of my weekly activities. Whilst an undergraduate at the University of Birmingham, being a member and eventually Chair of the University's Anglican Society – AngSoc – was a formative experience, particularly in terms of the relationship between faith and social action. The then Anglican Chaplain at the University of Birmingham, Rev Dr Nicholas lo Polito, was an eloquent preacher on the topic of social action and he spoke passionately about his experiences in Egypt. A trip that I undertook with AngSoc to Cairo in 2011 impressed upon me the importance of living out one's faith in the form of responding to need as well as sharing a sense of community with Christians across the world. For example, when visiting one of the poorest neighbourhoods in a rural area outside of Cairo, we gathered in the community's worship space and stood together saying the Lord's Prayer in our own languages. This was a simple act, but a moving experience and gave a strong sense of commonality of being Christian.

It was whilst studying undergraduate geography at the University of Birmingham that I first encountered the geography of religion when searching for a dissertation topic. I started with older texts such as Levine (1986) *On the Geography of Religion*, before moving to research that combined religion with non-representational theories which I was already interested in through undergraduate modules that I was taking. In combination with this, I read Canon Dr Terry Slater's (2004) *Encountering God: Personal Reflections on 'Geographer as Pilgrim'*. Slater lectured on compulsory urban geography modules that I took whilst studying at Birmingham, and at first it was a surprise to me to find that he also wrote on the geography of religion because I had not heard this mentioned in lectures or in the department. In his 2004 paper, Slater calls for more research in the geography of religion to come from "insider" positions (246). As I discuss in Chapter Five, insider and outsider positions can overlap and be transient; "insider" is not a straightforward association. Insider positions have been critiqued for being less critical of a position or experience, particularly in a faith context (for example by Lancione, 2014) yet whilst criticality must be maintained, there is no reason to single out a shared faith position as lacking in the ability to be critical. My undergraduate dissertation focussed upon Christians' performances of religion on the University of

Birmingham campus, combining ideas from the geography of religion and non-representational theories. For this I undertook ethnography and interviews with members of AngSoc and the University of Birmingham Christian Union and compared their experiences of performance of Christianity as a student on campus. Alongside other experiences at the University Chaplaincy, this contributed towards widening my understanding of Christianity beyond the Anglican denomination in which I had grown up, and to appreciate the breadth of possibilities of how a person might understand what it means to live out their faith. Whilst at Birmingham I was encouraged by Dr Phil Jones to continue to PhD research and he introduced me to the idea of action research. It was through this that I realised that my aspiration for impact in people's lives could be combined with PhD research in the geography of religion.

This led to my starting an ESRC funded Masters at the University of Bristol in 2013 on the Human Geography: Society and Space course. As well as developing my understanding of non-representational theories and affect theory through taught modules, a formative experience here was my Masters dissertation on two faith-based foodbanks in Bristol. For this I volunteered at six outlets across two foodbanks, and as well as interviewing volunteers and clients, I undertook volunteer activities such as greeting clients, chatting to clients, and packing food parcels. Volunteers at the foodbank shared with me how they were motivated by their Christian faith to volunteer, and how their faith was fundamental to how they understood their experiences at the foodbank. Building upon my earlier experiences in Egypt, this brought faith and social action closer to home, and I continued to volunteer at North Bristol Foodbank throughout writing my doctoral thesis. In the summer of 2014 I also attended an event by the national Christian network, the Cinnamon Network, where I heard talks about various Christian social franchises. One talk was about the charity 'MakeLunch' and this struck a chord with me in combination with the experiences at the foodbanks: that children in the UK were without enough to eat in the school holidays. Around this time there was also several BBC documentaries on food poverty and holiday hunger, with stories that I found shocking of the poverty that families and children were experiencing in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. This returns the story of how this doctoral research came about to September 2014. I had just finished research with two foodbanks in Bristol, and I was keen to find a faith-based project that I could establish and run as a foundation to the research before handing it over for longer term action. The talk I heard about MakeLunch in the summer of 2014 had stuck in my head, and I began to explore their work further and see if they would be interested in working with a PhD researcher. How this played out is told through the remainder of this thesis as I sought to combine faith, geography, philosophy, and a desire to make a tangible impact in people's lives.



## **Chapter One: Introduction**

With the increasing reliance upon the voluntary sector to respond to food poverty in the UK (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004) it is a critical time to understand how people start to volunteer, and how they persist in volunteering. In a context where faith groups are predominantly understood as being in decline, faith-based organisations - Christian groups in particular - are playing a vital role in responding to UK food poverty (APPG Hunger, 2014).

Volunteer burnout – when a person becomes overwhelmed by volunteering and therefore stops – is a problem for voluntary organisations and can result in a high turnover of volunteers (Wilson, 2000). For voluntary groups' action to be sustainable, how people start to volunteer, and how they persist in volunteering needs to be understood (Buckingham and Jolley, 2015). Sustainability is particularly important in the context of welfare responses where people are relying upon voluntary sector provision to survive (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004). However, voluntary organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and keep long-term volunteers (Aydinli et al., 2016).

This research makes use of an affect theory approach to volunteering in order to question how a person motivated by Christian faith starts to volunteer and respond to food poverty, and how they persist in volunteering. Such an approach moves beyond the statistics of who is volunteering, to understand *how* a person volunteers. Based around the power of a human to act (Spinoza, 1996), affect theory will allow us to understand how, by virtue of their faith, the volunteering experience means more to the volunteer than what is represented in the giving and receiving of food. In brief, faith here refers to Christian faith, and is understood as an individual's personal relationship with God (Brace et al., 2011).

I explore the question of how people start and persist in volunteering through the experiences of predominantly Christian volunteers at a Christian-based project (called 'Lunch') that I established and ran to respond to children's holiday hunger through the national charity MakeLunch. Holiday hunger is a dimension of food poverty when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays (APPG Hunger, 2017). This research makes four contributions. First, it contributes to the voluntary sector in understanding how people start and persist in volunteering. Secondly, it contributes to the geography of religion in how faith is performed in people's daily lives, and the role of faith-based organisations in society. Thirdly, it contributes to affect theory by questioning the mechanics of affect. By this I refer to questioning how the body comes to act and persists in acting in affect theory;

thereby emphasising affection, affective capacity and conatus as well as affect. Finally, the research contributes towards developing an affect theory approach to faith-based research.

## **1. Volunteering and Social Action**

How volunteering is defined varies with context (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004). In the UK and USA, volunteering is often understood in terms of a non-profit activity, whilst in Europe and the global South it is framed in terms of activism (Rochester, 2006). As this research focuses on the UK context I make use of The National Council for Voluntary Organisations' (NCVO, 2016, 1) definition of volunteering:

...any activity that involve spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.

There is a distinction between formal and informal volunteering: the former being within, and the latter outside, an organisation (Milligan and Conradson, 2006). Formal volunteering is common in the UK as one in four people volunteer once/month (NCVO, 2017a).

Milligan (2007) suggests that geography has been slow to engage with the topic of volunteering, and Cloke et al. (2007) add that the voluntary sector is growing, and yet is under-researched. Milligan and Fyfe (2004) characterise the geographies of voluntarism's contribution to the voluntary sector around three themes: space, with the uneven distribution of voluntary sector welfare provision; place, as voluntary sector provision is affected by where it is taking place; and the political context, as voluntary sector provision is increasingly in the context of the retracting welfare state. Milligan (2007) later summarises geographical attention in two ways, the first of which builds upon the space theme: patterns and reasons for who, where, and why people volunteer, and secondly, the nature of gender in volunteering. This research extends the space and patterns foci to *how* people volunteer, and is concerned with a particular form of volunteering: social action. I turn to this first, before exploring how affect theory gives a distinct insight into volunteering.

Like volunteering, social action does not have a single definition. It can be framed in terms of the state encouraging communities to manage their local services (Cabinet Office, 2015). A Cabinet Office (2015) report frames social action in terms of people contributing to society, but makes no reference to faith or religion. In this research I follow a broader definition that social action refers to people becoming involved in welfare service provision, rather than this involvement being compliant with the state retraction of welfare provision (McCabe et al., 2016). In particular I focus on faith-based organisations responding to welfare needs. In

Chapter Three I explore in detail the distinction between faith and religion in this thesis: religion as referring to an institutional sense of a collective belief in God through the major world religions, and faith referring to a personal relationship between an individual and God (Brace et al., 2011). This research emphasises faith over religion because I am concerned with how a person performs their faith in their daily life. I explore faith in the context of UK Christian faith, and therefore refer to 'God' throughout. As I explore in Chapter Five, focussing upon Christian faith makes use of my own Christian positionality in the research process and facilitates an in-depth analysis of faith performances. However, focussing on Christian faith (hereafter referred to as 'faith') is not to privilege Christianity over other religious faiths. Rather, the approach that this research takes could be extended to other religious faiths, and as I expand on in Chapter Eight, that is something I encourage as an extension of this research in the future.

The faith frame begs two questions: how is faith different from dealing with other kinds of motivation, and how will I distinguish faith motivations from other motivations? First, faith motivating action is distinct from other motivations because defining faith as the personal relationship between an individual and God (Brace et al., 2011) means that faith-motivated action in turn relates to God. Being personal means that each person's faith is different, although there are similarities by virtue of it relating a person to God. This makes the ontological status of such a motivation distinct from other motivations for the faith-motivated subject, even if other motivations result in a similar action (such as giving food). It is ontologically distinct because faith linking a person to God takes the motivation away from an exclusively human motivation, to relate it to God who Christians believe is beyond this world. For faithful subjects, the implications of this are that such a motivation is different because God is believed in Christianity to be omnigood, omniscient, and omnipotent (Augustine, 1964). Someone without faith may not agree with this ontological status and idea of God, and the approach of this research could be applied to a person having 'faith in anything' or to a pragmatic or ideological motivation. However, what faith-based research needs to recognise is that by virtue of its relation to God, religious faith is distinct from other motivations for the faith-motivated subject. For example, a person could be motivated to help a person experiencing food poverty by their faith that this is the right thing to do, or by a non-religious belief that all people have the right to food. Both these motivations could result in the giving of food, and both motivations could be understood as relating to a set of ideas over how to act. However, the faith motivation is distinct for the believer because it relates to God, and therefore a being that is beyond this world and superior to humans (Augustine, 1964).



Turning to the second question – how will I distinguish faith motivations from other motivations? – I recognise in this research that a faith motivation will operate alongside other motivations. I also engage with the idea that in being personal, each person's faith will be different. As I take forward in Chapter Six, this has implications for how people are motivated by faith to volunteer, and how each person performs their faith in their daily life. What is most significant for how I distinguish faith from other motivations, and avoid presuming that faith is key, is that the analysis of people's volunteering in relation to faith is *emergent* from Lunch volunteers' narratives, captured in diaries and interviews. Therefore, when faith is distinguished as a significant motivation, this is because volunteers wrote or spoke about it in this way. I purposely gave volunteers a general brief of what I would like them to write about in order that the role of faith in their experiences would be emergent, and not determined. Furthermore, the thematic mode of analysis employed in this research recognises where people referred to faith alongside other motivations, for example politics. What also emerged from people's narratives was the number of people who understood faith as impacting throughout their daily lives. However, this does not mean that they did not identify specific actions that were faith motivated, and relational to other motivations, these again being emergent from their narratives.

As I will discuss in Chapter Three, a faith-based organisation can take a variety of forms, and within this faith is not necessarily explicit (Cloke et al., 2005; Cloke, 2011a). What is consistent across faith-based organisations is that faith motivations play a significant role in service provision (Cloke, 2011a). There is a long history of faith-motivated social action in the UK (Cloke et al., 2012). What is different about faith-based social action in the present day is the context in which it operates: a context of postsecularity where faith-motivated action is not in the majority, and faithful and secular subjectivities and spaces co-exist (Cloke, 2015). In this context, as I will also take further in Chapter Three, faith-motivated social action is not without controversy (Orton, 2011), particularly in how it relates to faith groups and the state (for example as discussed by Lambie-Mumford and Jarvis, 2012; A. Williams, 2012; A. Williams et al., 2012). Through its focus on faith-based social action, this research contributes to two key themes in the geography of religion. First, it contributes to understanding performances of faith in people's daily lives. This takes us beyond a focus on performances of faith in worship spaces, to explore how faith can impact upon people's day-to-day lives (Holloway, 2003; Brace et al., 2011; Vincett et al., 2012). The second theme in the geography of religion that this research contributes to is the role of religion and faith-based organisations in society. This is because by playing an important role in welfare provision, faith-based organisations question secularisation theses that argue religion does not have a role in present day society (Cloke and Beaumont, 2012).

There is not an equal emphasis in this research between affect, faith and food: responding to food poverty is a way to think through the relationship between affect and faith. However, responding to food poverty is an important frame for this research, and had a different social action response been chosen (for example A. Williams, 2016, on responding to drug addiction) then the research would have been different. The focus on food makes a difference in how I explore people's performances of faith for two main reasons. First, food plays a distinct role in the Bible, for example in Jesus' miracles, people eating and being a community together, and bread representing Jesus' body at the Last Supper. This means that "food occupies a central place both in the expression of faith and in social organisation" of Christianity (Kneen, 1995, 22). Secondly, a faith-motivated response to food poverty is arguably easier for some Christians to act on based upon Biblical justification compared to other social action responses. There is a wealth of Biblical teaching on helping and feeding the poor. Therefore, whereas someone may question the morality of alcohol addiction (and in turn question whether to respond to it), hunger is presented less problematically in the Bible, arguably making it an easier need to respond to through Biblical justification – and momentarily putting UK food bank politics aside. Exploring people's performances of faith in terms of responding to food poverty therefore sits within a significant context of the importance of food in the Bible, and in the history of Christianity since then. The food frame of this research also makes a difference in terms of the research's contribution to the voluntary sector. This is because much of geographical concern on responses to food poverty has focussed on food banks (for example Lambie-Mumford, 2015; Garthwaite, 2016; Cloke et al., 2017) whereas this research focuses on a holiday hunger project (Lunch) through the national charity MakeLunch. Lunch did not operate with eligibility criteria, for example voucher access that Trussell Trust foodbanks use (A. Williams et al., 2016), and the children attended Lunch as a holiday club rather than only somewhere to eat. This therefore extends geographical concern on responses to food poverty beyond food banks, and beyond an eligibility based response. Furthermore, focussing upon holiday hunger is significant because there has been a lack of research into this specific dimension of food poverty, particularly from the angle of volunteers responding to holiday hunger. To date, the majority of research into UK holiday hunger has been carried out through the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger (for example APPG Hunger, 2017). In a political context where food poverty is increasing this research is important because it broadens the understanding of food poverty and responses to it.

## 2. Volunteering and Affect Theory

Affect theory is a well-established approach and ontological register for geographical enquiry within non-representational theories (from Thrift's seminal paper (2004) to recent edited collections by B. Anderson and Harrison (2010b) and Vannini (2015b)). Hayden Lorimer (2005, 84) calls non-representational theories "more-than-representational" theories to emphasise how this approach goes beyond direct representation, acknowledges how affect is less easily articulated, and highlights the complexity and unpredictability of experience.

Much geographical concern for affect theory has focussed on the interpretation of Gilles Deleuze (Thrift, 2008). In this research I return to Baruch Spinoza, Deleuze's inspiration, in order to explore the original conceptualisation of affect theory which is primarily in his work *Ethics*<sup>1</sup> (1996). Spinoza's (1996) conception gives four concepts: affect, affection, affective capacity and conatus. This research emphasises an engagement with each of these concepts, and for this reason I refer to 'affect theory' rather than 'affect' to refer to the overall theory; a distinction that is often not made in affective geographies (for example in much of the edited collection by B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010b). In Chapters Two and Four I will engage with each of these concepts in-depth, and therefore consider them only briefly here. First, affect is a concept that grasps the human body's increasing and decreasing power to act (1996, IIIdef3). Secondly, affections are the resultant bodily forces of the encounter with affect that give expression to the change occurring in the body and its power to act; the state of being affected (1996, IIIdef3). Affection is a way to understand affect as between bodies, and the immediate and durable influence of affect that shapes ongoing behaviour – and indeed produces what we sense to be the becoming of our subjectivity. When taken together, affect and affection allow an understanding of experience, volunteering or otherwise, that relates to past impacts upon a body, a body's current state, and its possibilities for action in the future (Wade and Hynes, 2013). Thirdly, affective capacity refers to what the body can do, resulting from the body's power to act increasing and decreasing as it is affected. Different bodies have different affective capacities, and these will change over time as the body is affected (1996, IIIdef1-3). Finally, conatus is the body's desire to persevere in existence which allows us to understand how the body pushes forward towards future actions (1996, IIIP6).

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<sup>1</sup> Following convention Spinoza's (1996) *Ethics* is referenced book (I-V), definition and number (def), proposition and number (P), proof (pf), demonstration (D), corollary (C), scholium (S), lemma (L), axiom (A). When directly quoting this is followed by the page number from the referenced edition of *Ethics*.

I have begun to show how approaching faith-based social action and volunteering through affect theory will give a specific lens for analysis. This raises a question over how else I could have approached volunteering. Primarily focussing upon geographical enquiry, I categorise three main alternative approaches: identity, institutional or organisational, and ethos or morality.

Faith can be considered a “predisposition” towards volunteering (NCVO, 2007, 49). An identity approach to volunteering often frames volunteering in relation to other characteristics. For example Krutkowski (2014, cited in Guild et al., 2014) gives three types of volunteering motivation: altruistic – wanting to give back; instrumental – some form of self-development; and obligatory – feeling a moral duty to volunteer. This can be extended through statistical analysis where studies have come to a variety of conclusions on the statistical significance of faith as an influence on volunteering (for example see Becker and Dhingra, 2001; Einolf, 2011; Forbes and Zampelli, 2014). Amongst geographical consideration of religion and identity, Baillie Smith et al. (2013, 127) define religion as a “set of social relations”. Therefore, although they explore the development of religious subjectivities of volunteers at a faith-based international charity, this makes more of religion as a part of people's identity than in terms of the impact of religion upon their daily lives and performances. Their work is followed with the impact of faith-based volunteering on the young people's transition to adulthood (Hopkins et al., 2015) which again primarily focusses on faith in relation to identity.

Approaches to volunteering with an institutional or organisational focus are often framed in terms of the voluntary sector taking the place of the retracting welfare state (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a; 2003b). For example, Conradson (2003, 1975) explores the volunteering welfare response at a community drop-in centre in New Zealand, framing this in terms of an organisational space that is “brought into being, take on certain experiential characteristics, and are reproduced through time.” An organisational approach to volunteering recognises that volunteers' experiences are shaped by the organisation with which they are volunteering (Cloke et al., 2007). When volunteering is related to the institution of the state, then it can be scrutinised in terms of citizenship and social capital, particularly within political theory. Volunteering and citizenship builds upon the work of Durkheim who perceived voluntary activity as something to regulate individual hedonism (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a). In turn, volunteering and social capital follows from Putman (1993 cited in Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a, 407) who defines social capital as “features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action.” An

institutional framing of volunteering can therefore question the degree to which volunteers are compliant with the state, and contribute towards the community.

Finally, an ethos or morality framing on volunteering emphasises the idea that a person may volunteer from a moral motivation that is not necessarily religious. This approach extends to how the person hopes to be impacted by volunteering, such as to improve oneself. For example, Barnett et al. (2005, 30) explore the idea of moral serving: “the mediated work of creating oneself as a more virtuous person through practices that acknowledge responsibilities to others.” This sets volunteering within the geographies of morals and worth, which Barnett (2011; 2014) explicates with consideration to how to approach the acting subject in terms of ethics. Such an approach can overlap with an organisational frame on volunteering. For example, Conradson (2003) in the aforementioned study of the organisational space of the drop-in centre extends this in relation to a social care ethic, questioning how provision is given.

In many ways, an approach to volunteering through affect theory works alongside these other approaches. However, it also allows research to recognise the significance of faith for the acting subject. It does this in five main ways which I build upon in Chapters Two and Four:

1. By heightening the ontological status of faith in research by recognising the power of faith to motivate action;
2. By raising the dimension of faith-motivated social action that is “more-than” what is represented in that action;
3. By making use of shared religious positionality in how I can interpret shared affects and affections;
4. By raising awareness of the impact on the volunteer by prioritising affection as much as affect;
5. By giving an understanding of volunteering as a process through the process of affect and affection.

A question remains for this approach: is everything an affect? In many ways the answer is affirmative because any experience can be analysed through affect theory. However, in Chapters Six and Seven I discuss how, whilst insights are gained from analysing faith through affect theory, care must be taken not to reduce faith *only* to an affect, but also recognise the power of faith for the individual.

### 3. Research Aim and Questions

I conclude this chapter with the research aim and questions:

*Aim:* To think faith and affect theory through each other, in order to question how humans will and have a capacity to act, specifically as volunteers for social action

*Research questions:*

1. How can we understand our capacity and will to act?
2. How do we have the capacity and will to reflect upon our actions?
3. How is there an impact of having acted and reflected upon persistence of action?

The aim of this research is to think faith and affect theory through each other. I do this in the context of faith-motivated volunteers responding to holiday hunger at a project that I established and ran. This participatory approach engages with the very action that the research seeks to understand, thereby engaging with the question of faith and volunteering at a different level to research that relies entirely on how others report acting. It is through responding to this aim that this research contributes to the growing affect theory approach for faith-based research. The stakes of this should not be underplayed: such an approach is both important and necessary because, as this research explores, it gives the opportunity to engage with faith in research in a way that recognises the ontological status of faith for the faith-motivated subject, as well as questioning how human action and persistence in action takes place. The three research questions take us through the journey of how a person starts to volunteer, to how they reflect on their experience and persist in volunteering. From these questions, the final stake of the research is to take what can be learnt through affect theory about the process of volunteering, and how to retain volunteers, into voluntary sector practice.

The remainder of this thesis is structured around seven chapters. In *Chapter Two* I develop an understanding of affect theory and two key concerns in the geography of religion – the performances of faith in people's daily lives, and the relevance of faith and religion in society – before culminating with the growing affect theory approach to analyse faith-based research. In *Chapter Three* I explore the situation of food poverty and holiday hunger in the UK. I frame this in the context of the retracting welfare state and a growing response to food poverty from faith-based organisations. Here I also explicate the notions of faith and religion, taking forward faith and faith-based organisations. *Chapter Four* brings together Chapters Two and Three: affect theory cannot only be used to analyse the faith-motivated

acting body. Rather, particularly when the Christian faith prioritises human action as through will, it must be questioned how, through affect theory, the body comes to act. This chapter culminates with the advantages of an affect theory approach to faith-based volunteering.

*Chapter Five* explores the research methodology as I established and ran a MakeLunch project responding to holiday hunger. This approach is framed within action research, participatory geographies and ethnography, combined with an affect theory interpretive strategy. My own and volunteers' experiences at Lunch, captured in diaries and interviews, form the basis of the analysis. *Chapter Six* is the first of two analysis chapters. Here I question how a person acts; how faith is an affect and motivation to act. *Chapter Seven* takes us to the next stage of a volunteer's journey, questioning how people persist in faith-motivated action; faith as an affect must be continually re-ignited. Finally, *Chapter Eight* concludes the thesis: affect theory gives an insight into how people are motivated and persist in volunteering when faith is an affect in a cycle of action and reflection. This chapter extends the research contributions to affect theory and the geography of religion into the voluntary sector with a policy briefing on how voluntary group leaders can retain volunteers.





## **Chapter Two: An Affect Theory Approach to the Geography of Religion**

### **1. Introduction**

How is faith performed in people's daily lives? How can it be researched? In response to these questions, this research engages with two key areas in geographical research: affective geographies and the geography of religion. In this chapter first I explore the meaning of a non-representational approach which frames affective geographies. I emphasise that this is not anti-representation, but rather stresses the complexity and "more-than-representational" elements of experience (Lorimer, 2005, 84). I then focus specifically upon affective geographies – also called affect theory to recognise its reach beyond geography. Affect theory can be considered through multiple angles, but following the Deleuzian strand of enquiry I advocate a return from Deleuze to focus upon the thinker that was his inspiration: Spinoza. Why return to Spinoza? I follow others who have focussed on affect in relation to Spinoza (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999; Damasio, 2003; Sharp, 2007; Massumi, 2015). This return to Spinoza brings to the fore an emphasis on the question of how action comes about, followed in Chapter Four, which has arguably been neglected in the Deleuzian interpretation. Finally, under affect theory I consider a recent extension of the collective dimension of affect and empirical examples of affective analysis in order to show the opportunities for further use of affect theory in practice.

The second section of this chapter explores key themes in the geography of religion; first, moving beyond focussing upon worship spaces to appreciate the role that religion and faith play in people's daily lives, and secondly the role that religion and faith play in society. This research engages with each of these two themes in exploring faith-based social action, which I take further in Chapter Three. This chapter hence forms the prerequisite to understanding faith-based social action.

Finally and crucially for this research, I bring the geographies of affect and religion together to explicate current examples of, and argue for, an affective approach to the geography of religion. Part of the power of religion is found in its representational and institutional set-up, but in terms of its power and meaning for religious/faithful subjects, the full extent of its power is through belief in God. Affect theory is therefore an apposite means to analyse faith experiences across space because just as faith – with nuances for different faiths – refers to a belief in God beyond immediate and worldly experience, so affect theory goes beyond immediate representation to what is "more-than" in an experience. As a result, affect theory

gives the opportunity to take seriously the ontologies of both affect and faith. Through these discussions this chapter forms the basis of this research for an affect theory approach to faith-based research.

## **2. Non-representational Theories and Affective Geographies**

### *2.1. Non-representational Theories: an Overview*

In recent decades non-representational theories have grown to become a prominent mode of enquiry in human geography. I refer to non-representational *theories* to acknowledge that there is not one sole theory, and rather that multiple theorists have developed interpretations which together make up non-representational approaches to research. Non-representational theories place importance on everyday experience, making experience an experiment in itself (Lorimer, 2005; McCormack, 2010). This is important for this research because it recognises the unknown element of experience, and that experience can change both itself and those involved. In non-representational theories, experience and experiment are therefore something that knowledge can be developed through, which mirrors the understanding of knowledge in action research and participatory methodologies (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012) that I utilise in this research and explicate in Chapter Five.

Non-representational theories acknowledge that there is more to experience than can be fully represented, giving questions over language and communication (Dewsbury, 2010a). Accordingly, as discussed by Hayden Lorimer (2005, 84), non-representational theories could be called “more-than-representational” theories because they consider experience beyond what is immediately represented. Furthermore, as Ben Anderson and Paul Harrison (2010a) advocate, in non-representational theories it is important to consider the absent as well as the present because the former can impact upon experience as much as the latter. However, rather than being against representation in itself, non-representational theories portray representation as being elusive which highlights the complexity and unpredictability of experience (Lorimer, 2005; B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a). Justin Wilford (2015, 2235) describes non-representational theories as referring to the “ineffable... representing the unrepresentable”. Wilford argues that ineffability reduces representational possibility, which is problematic because being nameable is important for representation. However, what I take from this is a different emphasis, and a means to add to Lorimer’s notion of “more-than-representational” theories, by understanding non-representational theories as emphasising the unrepresented in daily life more than the unrepresentable. Parts of experience could be unrepresented because they are taken for granted, or because we do not have the means to notice them and they therefore remains largely unnoticed. In the

same way an affect is largely unrepresented and unnoticed because it operates between bodies. However, affect can be understood and to some extent represented through received affections and changes in bodies' affective capacities. Overall this means that an empirical analysis through non-representational theories will endeavour to look beyond what is clearly represented in an experience to see how there are other factors at play.

Non-representational theories have a distinct approach to the body. They emphasise the (human) body as being relational both to other bodies and to the environment (Bailey et al., 2008; B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a; Vannini, 2015a). Through this they question and experiment with how experience can be represented, going so far as to perceive experience as an experiment (Dewsbury, 2010a; 2010b; McCormack, 2010). Questioning and experimenting with space and experience led to an early resonance between non-representational thought and practice with empirical illustrative examples in theatre (for example see Dewsbury, 2000). More recently practice and performance have been extended more broadly, for example in religious practice which I will address imminently in this chapter. Within non-representational thought emphasis is put upon the everyday (Lorimer, 2005; Vannini, 2015a). Indeed, both of these – experiment and the everyday – are two of the seven principles Nigel Thrift (2008, cited in Vannini, 2015a) gives for non-representational theories. Thrift's other five principles for non-representational theories refer to: the pre-individual (it not being based around the subject), practices (meaning material bodies of work that become established over time), a focus on things (as emergent energies, not simply irrelevant parts of the world), affect (following the affective turn), and questions over human agency (less focus on the human because other bodies are important) (Thrift, 2008). However, J-D Dewsbury (2010b, 323) also draws attention to the “not always”, perhaps in order for the moments which are transient and least noticed or represented to be brought to the forefront of geographical methodology and analysis. How this can be mastered in practice will be discussed further in Chapter Five within the thesis methodology. Doel and Clarke (2007, 897) propose that a non-representational approach can be understood as “montage” in order to combine both thought and action. This is particularly significant in the empirical application of non-representational theories to endeavour to capture a fuller depth of experience. Non-representational theories therefore give a distinct approach to geographical enquiry which emphasises the relational body in experimental experience.

## *2.2. Affect Theory*

One significant dimension of non-representational theories within human geography is the attention to affect theory, commonly known as affective geographies. Affect theory in this sub-discipline is largely conceived through the twentieth century writings of Gilles Deleuze and his interpretation of the sixteenth century philosopher Baruch Spinoza (Thrift, 2004). However, there are multiple understandings of the concept of affect, with others commonly understood as being through phenomenology (in relation to emotion), psychoanalysis (in relation to drive), and Darwinism (in relation to emotion and evolution) (Thrift, 2004). Affect is both a specific and ambiguous concept (Vannini, 2015a, 8-9):

Affect is a pull and push, as intensity of feeling, a sensation, a passion, an atmosphere, an urge, a mood, a drive – all of the above and none of the above in particular.

There is therefore not one distinct definition of affect, and so I will show my understanding of affect theory through Spinoza.

Before moving to consider a Spinozian understanding of affect in-depth, I first acknowledge the debated relationship in affective and emotional geographies between affect theory and emotion. Depending upon whether one comprehends affect through Deleuze or phenomenology can impact upon whether affect and emotion are considered as distinct concepts or not (for example see Pile, 2010). When emotion is considered alone this is generally through emotional geographies (K. Anderson and Smith, 2001). Broadly speaking, within affective geographies, affect and emotion are considered as distinct, yet there is not unanimous agreement amongst theorists on whether affect or emotion should be privileged over the other (Thien, 2005). For example, Pile (2010, 9) proposed a three “layer cake” model of emotion, feeling, and affect (listed from highest to lowest layer). Pile (2010) argued that this was an interpretation of B. Anderson (2006) on affect, giving an interpretation of affect as distinct from emotion and feelings, and not impacted by, or able to impact, either of these. However, the paper received significant criticism (for example see Bondi and Davidson, 2011; Curti et al., 2011; Dawney, 2011) for being dualistic and giving a linguistic misunderstanding of the Deleuzian conception of affect mixed with psychoanalysis; criticisms which I concur with. Pile’s (2011) response to these criticisms highlighted the lack of consensus in human geography between affect and emotion and argued for the importance of continued debate. For others, analysis can intentionally prioritise emotion over affect, as for example Hadfield-Hill and Horton (2014) do in their application of affect and emotion to children’s experiences of research participation. A further conversation that stems from the debate over affect and emotion relates to intensity and intentionality. Massumi (2002) writes on intensity in relation to affect, using this to distinguish between

affect and emotion through an experiment showing a half second delay between the mind and physical response. However, the scientific rigour and validity of this experiment, which Massumi's thought is based upon, has been questioned (Leys, 2011a). Whether this critique is significant or not is debatable when Massumi has endeavoured to portray something that ultimately is unrepresented. Leys (2011a; 2011b) argues that much of this combination of affect theory and neuroscience has resulted in an anti-intentionalist line of thought, but suggests that this need not to be necessarily so.

Acknowledging the diversity of the debate over affect and emotion, why then have I chosen to focus on affect theory over emotional geographies? The reason links to the depth of analysis possible with affect theory and emotion. Emotions are predominantly represented in an experience, whereas affect theory focusses upon what is "more-than" represented (Lorimer, 2005, 84). This does not make one approach superior to the other. However, for analysing faith-based experience, affect theory gives a significant advantage over emotion because by virtue of faith relating the believer to God, faith is about what is "more-than" in an experience. As I take further in the third section of this chapter and in Chapter Four, an affect theory approach can therefore analytically match engagement with the "more-than" what is represented dimension of faith-based experience, and through this raise the ontological status of faith in research.

### 2.3. *Affect Theory through Spinoza*

Of the four affective approaches outlined by Thrift (2004) I follow an Deleuzian/Spinozian understanding. This approach to affect through Deleuze has been widely taken forward in human geography both theoretically and methodologically. Notable recent examples include work by B. Anderson and Harrison (2010a), Dewsbury (2010a) and McCormack (2010; 2015). In this chapter I turn to Spinoza directly in order to engage with his original conceptualisation of affect theory and the implications of the ideas found there. I use affect theory to refer to the overall conception, and refer to the individual components explicitly; affect, affection, affective capacity.

Spinoza (1996) details his understanding of affect in *Ethics* which was published posthumously in 1677. Therefore to ascertain Spinoza's understanding of affect I focus upon *Ethics* as well as others' analysis of this work, but maintain focus on Spinoza (rather than, for example, Deleuze). Spinoza (1996, IIIdef3, 70) gives a central definition of affect in the third book of *Ethics*:

By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained.

This definition of affect emphasises the body's power to act which can be increased and decreased. Immediately there is a need to understand what Spinoza means by a body. Different Deleuzian/Spinozian interpretations of affect give different emphasis upon a body as human and/or non-human (Lorimer, 2008). Here, however, I look for the Spinozian understanding. Earlier in book two of *Ethics* Spinoza (1996, IIdéf1) refers to a body as being human or non-human, yet in the discussion over the mind and what is later termed conatus, Spinoza clarifies this as specifically referring to the human body (for example book III, postulates 1 and 2). Therefore, whilst others have emphasised affect through non-representational theories as being about human and non-human bodies (including for example Deleuze, 1988; 1990; B. Anderson, 2006), in Spinoza's original conceptualisation the focus is upon human bodies. Significantly here, whilst affect can be understood through the body in Spinoza's definition, an affect goes beyond the body and cannot be reduced to the individual subject but rather looks at power and relations between subjects (bodies) plus the forces which impact upon subjects (Hynes, 2013). Affect hence goes beyond both the body and subject because it operates at a level *between* bodies, rather than *to* the body (Blackman and Venn, 2010; Hynes, 2013). A (human) body is therefore integral to an understanding of affect but it is not the totality of affect.

Spinoza also refers to the body as a mode (IIdéf1); a mode being a substance's affections (IIdéf5). Linking Spinoza's definition of affect to a mode brings to the fore a distinction between affect and affection. Deleuze (1988; 1997; 2007) gives a clear explication of Spinoza's distinction: an affect relates to a body's power to act and a transition from one affective state to another, and an affection is the state of the body itself. An affect is therefore found between bodies, whilst an affection is found within the impact on the body itself (Spinoza, 1996, IIIIdéf3). Hence as B. Anderson (2006, 735) adds: "'Being affected-affecting' are therefore two sides of the same dynamic shift, or change, in the body". Together affect and affection relate to past impacts upon a body, a body's current state, and its possibilities for action in the future. This distinction between affect and affection is poignant for both affective geographies and understanding volunteering because it emphasises that past experience, and therefore how the body is affected, is imperative to what the body can do next. To focus on affect over affection – as in much of the work in affective geographies to date - rather than place both affect and affection as integral to human experience - is to miss one side of how the body's power to act plays out, and in turn, how action comes about (Hardt, 1993). Rather, when taken together, affect and affection allow us an understanding of experience, volunteering or otherwise, that relates to past impacts upon a body, a body's current state, and its possibilities for action in the future (Wade and Hynes, 2013). For this reason I specifically refer to affect and affection as

distinct concepts, and affect theory to refer to Spinoza's overall conception. Both affect and affection will therefore be utilised in an affective analysis of faith-based social action, contributing to both affective geographies, and affective geographies with the geography of religion.

A final dimension of affect theory is affective capacity. Building upon Spinoza's definition of affect (IIIdef3), affective capacity refers to a body increasing or decreasing in its power to act (to affect) and to be affected. Different bodies therefore have different affective capacities to act (Deleuze, 1990). In *Spinoza and the Three "Ethics"* Deleuze (1997) explicates how bodies look to increase their affective capacity by interacting with other bodies similar to their own. Following this is the concept of conatus; the body's desire to persevere in existence (Spinoza, 1996, IIIP6). Montag (1999) construes the word root of conatus as being *conatur* (in the Latin) referring to striving and endeavouring. Gatens and Lloyd (1999, 3) highlight the usefulness of the notion of conatus:

[Conatus is] a rich and resourceful apparatus, integrating the physics of bodies with the understanding of political relations and institutions which organise and stabilise the differentiated powers and individuals.

Conatus is a concept which bridges a philosophical understanding of a body's action with the political implications of this, making it a concept of both theoretical and empirical value. In relation to affective capacity, Spinoza (1996, IIIP11S) gives the example of a person being in pain as having a decreased affective capacity and lessened conatus because they are less able to act than a healthier person with a greater affective capacity. Indeed, some bodies ultimately have a higher capacity and therefore greater freedom than others, for example an animate body has a higher potential for action than an inanimate object (Spinoza, 1996). However, it should be noted that in Spinoza's ontology humans are not separate from or distinct to the rest of nature (Sharp, 2011). What conatus allows us to understand, then, is how the body pushes forward towards future actions (1996, IIIP6). Discussion of affective capacity and conatus stems from a key question in *Ethics* over what a body can do (IIIP2S). How though does this action come about? How does the body act in affect theory? I return to this subsequently in Chapter Four.

Overall I return to Spinoza as the primary theorist in what has largely in human geography become known as a Deleuzian understanding of affect. In focussing upon Spinoza I understand affect as the power and capacity of a body to act, and to be affected, which differs for different bodies. Fully engaging with Spinozian affect theory raises the status of affection, affective capacity and conatus alongside the oft focussed on concept of affect.

Following Spinoza, I emphasise the human body but acknowledge the impact of non-human bodies upon a human body's affective capacity.

#### *2.4. Collective Dimensions of Affect Theory*

In affective geographies, affect theory is more often than not discussed in reference to single subjects and bodies. Affective atmospheres are a recent development in affective geographies to consider the collective dimensions of affect theory (Adey et al., 2013; B. Anderson, 2014; B. Anderson and Ash, 2015; McCormack, 2015). Affective atmospheres provide a different way of considering affective spaces (Woodward, 2011), emphasising affect as lived rather than inert (Stewart, 2011). Amongst affect theorists investigating collective atmospheres, for example Peter Adey, Ben Anderson, James Ash, David Bissell and Derek McCormack, there are several key characteristics of affective atmospheres that can be identified. Mirroring the overall concept of affect, affective atmospheres can be both a cause and an effect, and multiple atmospheres can co-exist in a single space (B. Anderson and Ash, 2015). However, a single atmosphere cannot be identically repeated because atmospheres remain transient (B. Anderson, 2014). Furthermore, a body cannot generate an atmosphere on its own, and yet an atmosphere relies upon bodies to exist and emphasises the relationality between bodies (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2013; 2016). Ash (2013) emphasises that affective atmospheres should explore both human and non-human affects. He argues that the non-human should be considered as a valuable entity in itself, not simply in relation to the human as occurs in much of geographical analysis more broadly. Affective atmospheres hence emphasise affect operating in collectively shared space, and the role of human and non-human actors within this space.

To expand upon these characteristics I briefly consider recent empirical applications of affective atmospheres. First, Adey et al. (2013) and Bissell (2010) use examples of public trains; Adey et al. in relation to train station surveillance, and Bissell in relation to travelling by train. Adey et al. (2013) use the analysis of train station surveillance to emphasise that affective atmospheres are neither objective nor subjective, but rather a mixture of each of these qualities. Bissell (2010) in turn uses the example of public train travel to consider the spatiality of the concept of affect, and how the emergence of affects are both unpredictable and can affect different people differently. Bissell uses the example of a train passenger being told unexpectedly to speak more quietly on the phone, and how the passenger reacted with anger and frustration (these being affects that express the force of affect) – but considering the spatiality of affect, the passenger's reaction lessened over time, and another person could have reacted differently. For my research, these two examples therefore



further highlight the qualities of affective atmospheres, particularly their being a mixture of objective/subjective, and as both unpredictable and transient.

Secondly, B. Anderson (2016) utilises both affect and affective atmospheres in relation to neoliberalism, and Closs Stephens (2016) explores affective atmospheres in relation to nationalism. Anderson argues that affective atmospheres contribute towards the formation of neoliberalism, not as one particular affect but as a culmination of affects which vary temporally and are represented as “dynamic structures of feeling” (749). Closs Stephens finds that nationalism operates through affect, and affective atmospheres provide a means to understand how nationalism prevails over time. Anderson and Closs Stephens’ work is poignant for this research to show how affective atmospheres can contribute towards and relate to political atmospheres and moods. Cloke and Conradson (forthcoming) interpret Anderson’s argument to analyse the affective atmospheres around the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand. Their analysis shows how neoliberal atmospheres were disrupted by the generation of new affective atmospheres by participatory and third sector organisations’ activities in the time after the physical earthquake. What these examples highlight for my research is how affects and atmospheres can culminate, but also challenge each other.

Thirdly, McCormack (2015) explores affective atmospheres in relation to balloons. This example is distinct from the others in that McCormack uses the balloon to think through atmospheres rather than to gain insights into the balloon itself. In doing so McCormack (2015, 96, 100) questions the use of the term “method” in non-representational thinking:

Atmosphere provides a way of foregrounding the fact that affective spacetimes of variable reach and intensity can be and are felt as forceful gatherings without necessarily being formed... For non-representational styles of thinking, concepts are not applied to the world, no more than methods are. Concepts are recreated every time they are thought with.

I follow McCormack’s (2015) argument that affect as a concept is recreated in each real world situation. This is important: affective atmospheres are not a concept to apply but rather change how the world can be understood. These examples of work on affective atmospheres show the usefulness of this concept in highlighting the collective dimension of affect which has often been neglected in favour of a notion of affect and an individual subject/body. However, when affective atmospheres are matched with ‘real world’ situations, too easily can empirical application become description of a generic atmosphere, and in this way cease to be a non-representational approach but rather a pure representation. The work of Cloke and Conradson (forthcoming) is ideal to give an example

of the difference between description and affective analysis. They could have described the atmosphere at the participatory and creative third sector responses to the earthquakes. However, their analysis goes further than this by analysing how these affective atmospheres were generated, and how they interrupt the prevailing neoliberal atmospheres. In this thesis I will highlight the collective nature of affect at points in the analysis but, as I will revisit in Chapter Five, particular care must be taken to avoid falling into description rather than affective analysis.

### *2.5. Affect Theory in Practice*

Affective geographies to-date have explored affect theory conceptually and in practice, and as a combination of these. Building upon McCormack (2015) questioning the application of single concepts as methods to the world, there is a challenge in how to approach affect theory methodologically (Blackman and Venn, 2010). In writing empirically with affect theory, care must also be taken to avoid linguistic slippage between affect and emotion (Dawney, 2013). As well as the challenge of representing the unrepresented and approach experience (Dewsbury, 2010b; Lorimer, 2015; Vannini, 2015a), there is a difficult balance between setting out the conceptual foregrounding of affect theory, whilst not limiting affect to be a purely a theoretical concept without empirical value. I take this discussion forward in the methodology as I apply an affective approach to analysing a faith-based social action project. In this section I explore recent examples of research using affect theory in practice in order to highlight different aspects of research on affect in practice.

I begin with work by Andrew Williams (2016) on an ethnography at a Christian therapeutic drug centre. Williams combines ethnography with affect to explore the spiritual landscape of the drug centre. This is an advantageous approach for affect in practice because it allows the researcher to have first-hand experience of the space in which they are writing about, and gain awareness of that very “pull and push, as intensity of feeling, a sensation, a passion, an atmosphere, an urge, a mood, a drive” (Vannini, 2015a, 8-9). This is as opposed to the researcher relying solely upon others to relay their experience, for example through interviews. In combining action research, participatory geographies, and ethnography in this thesis I echo Williams’ advantageous approach. A second example of affect in practice is Cloke et al. (2008) in their use of affect to analyse homelessness in Bristol. They combine an affective analysis with interviews and participant observation in order to highlight the performance and practices of being homeless. This challenges conventional studies on homelessness by showing the planned and unplanned performative acts of homeless people through which the homeless city is constructed. Through this Cloke

et al. (2008, 260) highlight how affect can show more than otherwise would become apparent in an empirical analysis:

For those now caught up on their immediate affects, such moments often go unnoticed and unremarked. But they leave traces upon the city that reach beyond those involved in the original encounter and shape subsequent interactions between homeless people and between homeless people and others.

From Cloke et al.'s affective analysis there is therefore an important benefit of affect: the means to highlight things, actions, and moments which may otherwise be unnoticed, and indeed unrepresented in research analysis and/or daily life. This benefit of an affective analysis is crucial for this research into faith-based social action because it will highlight the "more-than" representational elements of faith-based experience. Other examples of recent research make use of an affect framework more loosely to their analysis. Walkerdine (2010) uses an affective approach through psychoanalysis to analyse experience of a former steelworks community, whilst Stevenson (2015) uses affect to study the experience of the Oberammergau Passion Play in Bavaria, Germany. Through this Stevenson builds upon the debate over affect and emotion. Stevenson argues that affect and emotion present different modes of intensity, but affect holds more potential as a concept because it is more dynamic than emotion. Walkerdine in contrast, gives less explicit reference to affect in the analysis, leaving this to be inferred throughout the writing. In using affect theory and affection with faith-based social action in this research I will focus upon affect over emotion, and make both affect and affection explicit throughout the research analysis.

Overall there are clear challenges in how to use affect theory in practice. Approaches vary in the degree in which affect is explicit or inferred in analyses of 'real world' instances – for example Williams compared to Walkerdine – but all endeavour to challenge how experience is represented. The best examples explicitly show that through affect theory experience can be experimented with to give innovative analyses. The examples here show this to be particularly effective when combined with participatory methods such as by Williams and Cloke et al. because affect can then be used to highlight elements which otherwise may be unrepresented in research analysis. There therefore remains the opportunity to further develop the use of affect theory in practice with a strong conceptual basis which this research aims to do through a synthesis between affective geographies and the geography of religion.

### 3. Geography of Religion

The development of the geography of religion as a sub-discipline in human geography has not been unequivocal. In 1981 the American Geographer David Sopher commented (510):

A decade and more of modest increase in the volume of geographic writing on religions and religious institutions has not brought consensus on the nature of the pertinent field or even agreement whether there can be such a field at all.

This highlights two key points. First, the subject matter in the geography of religion has been deliberated; there have been questions over what is an appropriate focus for the field.

However, this is perhaps unsurprising for a field which was then in its infancy. Secondly, and arguably more significantly, Sopher shows how the validity of religion being a concern within geography was questioned. To some degree this question has continued to haunt the field (Stump, 2008; Yorgason and Della Dora, 2009; Henkel, 2011). For example in 2010 a “Geographies of Religion” conference was opposed by member(s) on the *Critical Geographies* email mailing list on the grounds that the theme did not contribute towards “critical and radical geography” (Olson et al., 2013, 4). Despite criticisms such as this, overall in the last two decades there has been a significant revival in the interest in religion in geography (Holloway, 2011a) after a distinct lack of engagement (Cloke, 2011a; Henkel, 2011; Kong, 2011). For example, 2007 saw the launch of a large AHRC/ESRC *Religion and Society Programme* which explored religion in the UK with significant contributions from both geography and sociology (Catto, 2014). This interest has not simply been from religious geographers (although this can also play a role, for example see Olson, 2008), but also from those who see religion as a theoretical and empirical interest in itself, especially recently in relation to faith motivate social action (for example Lambie-Mumford and Jarvis, 2012).

The geography of religion has its roots in the study of the growth of Christianity across the world, moving in the twentieth century to a cultural geography context of the physical impact of religion upon the landscape (Kong, 1990; Park, 1994; Kong, 2009). Canonical examples of this are Sopher’s (1967) *Geography of Religions* in which he considers religious systems and their relation to land, social and economic behaviour, and the geographical distribution of world religions; and Canadian Geographer Gregory Levine’s (1986) *On the Geography of Religion* exploring religious life in relation to environmental impacts. In recent years the geography of religion has moved from description of the landscapes to interpretation (Ley and Tse, 2013). Examples here include Proudfoot (1996) on the role of symbolism and spirituality on the urban planning of the city of Canberra, Australia; and Gale (2004) on urban planning debates in relation to the building of mosques in Birmingham, UK. Proudfoot (1996) is concerned with the use of spiritual symbols including circles and triangles in the

overall layout of buildings and space in Canberra. Gale (2004) gives a case study of three mosques in Birmingham, exploring the role of planners and the local community in the building of new mosques, and debates of multiculturalism within this. I highlight these two examples to show how work has considered religion in relation to urban planning and spatiality. Most recently, religion and landscape has been considered in terms of a religious landscape. This again is a form of cultural landscape, but recognises the role that religion and landscape each play to influence each other (for example see Kong, 2013; Olson, 2013).

As to some extent reflected in work on religion and landscape, more broadly since the turn of the twenty-first century, the geography of religion has moved from analysing religion spatially to consider religion in a more social, societal context. Is it this context that this thesis focusses upon. Here the cultural importance of religion is recognised (Stump, 2008), and there is greater attention to the religious subject rather than religion as a category (for example of identity) (Sutherland, 2017). The ground for this was set in the early 1990s at the Association of American Geographers' Conference in 1991, in which it was argued that the context of the geography of religion needed to be reconsidered socially and culturally (Cooper, 1992). Furthermore, religion had already played a role in other subdisciplines of human geography, for example within cultural geography. Research areas for religion in a social context have been wide ranging, including: discussion over the role of faith schools in wider society, often in relation to a question over segregation and assimilation (for example see Valins, 2003; Burgess et al., 2005); religion in relation to social justice such as modern slavery (Bettis Gee and Smith, 2015); and the changing relationship between religion and the economy (Johnston and Wall, 2015). Research areas here can also be classified by national contexts, one example being a focus on the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and national identity in Russia; Sidorov (2000) explores the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (Moscow) in relation to national identity politics, building links with similar debates in sociology (for example see Borowik, 2002; Agadjanian, 2006). Beyond national contexts, Dwyer et al. (2016) provide a current example of bringing together religion as landscape and a social concern in their work on multiculturalism in a congregation of religious buildings in suburban Richmond, British Columbia. Together these examples clearly place the geography of religion within both social and cultural geography and show the wide variety of work undertaken in the broad theme of religion as a social concern. Building upon this, the remainder of this section explores two key foci in the geography of religion: religion in daily life, and the role of religion and faith in society.

### *3.1. Beyond Worship Spaces: Religion and Faith as Performed in Daily Life*

Traditionally the geography of religion has considered sacred spaces in terms of places of worship and their impact upon the physical (urban) landscape but there are repeated calls for the geography of religion to move beyond sacred spaces (Kong, 2010; Olson et al., 2013). However, the relationship between religion and place is not straight-forward (McAlister, 2005). Increasingly it is argued within the geography of religion that sacred and non-sacred (or secular) spaces should not be seen as a binary or dualism (Brace et al., 2011; Holloway, 2013; Olson et al., 2013). How, then, can these spaces be understood?

If affect and space are understood as emergent (Holloway, 2011a), then a space being – or becoming – sacred or secular is also emergent, and its meaning will vary for one person to another. The same space can therefore mean different things to different people; a church could be a place of worship for some, and the home of the local foodbank to others (or both of these things to yet another). An example in the geography of religion which can help to illustrate this is that of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is both about movement across space, and how through performances that space is understood and interpreted by pilgrims (Scriven, 2014; Maddrell and Scriven, 2016). What can be a sacred site for a pilgrim, can be a tourist attraction to another (Della Dora, 2012). Pilgrimage therefore illustrates the interaction between humans and space in how a space is interpreted and understood, but also how this meaning can emerge over time as a pilgrim engages with a new space. A second example which can be helpful in understanding the overlap between spaces traditionally considered as sacred or secular is urban planning. Moser (2013) uses the examples of the cities of Putrajaya (capital of Malaysia), Gronzy (capital of Chechen Republic), and Masdar (an eco-city in Abu Dhabi) to show how each has been built around Islamic architecture, but for buildings across the city, including buildings without a religious function. Hence, what is found here is a religious influence in the public sphere. Consequently I understand sacred and secular spaces as emergent, porous spaces that mean different things to different people over time.

Furthermore, spaces of worship can play a significant role in people's daily space (Holloway, 2003), for example any day of the week rather than being a place to visit on a specific day of the week. The significant relationship between religious doctrine and daily life should not be missed or under-emphasised in geographical research (Bailey et al., 2007). This can be extended further to understand that people perform their religious faith in across different spaces in their daily lives. For example Vincett et al. (2012, 282) consider religiosity of young Scottish Christians and their performance of faith beyond spaces of worship. They found authenticity mattered to the young Christians in the research, with a negative

connotation of a “Sunday Christian” as research participants aspired for their Christian faith to impact upon every day of the week. Consequently, from this it can be appreciated that considering religion beyond traditionally sacred spaces – such as places of worship – emphasises religion as an integral dimension of a peoples’ identities and understandings of themselves. Significantly this moves identity beyond the traditional markers such as race, gender and disability (Cloe, 2005), to recognise that religion is an equally influential marker of identity (Holloway and Valins, 2002). Work in the geography of religion and beyond has begun to recognise this in the last two decades (Brace et al., 2006). Further examples of work in this area are found with Baillie Smith et al. (2013) and Hopkins et al. (2015) who have explored the religious dimension of transitions to adulthood with a case study of young Christians volunteering in South American countries. They found that Christianity was a significant part of the young people’s volunteering experience and subjectivities, forming a point of connection with the local South American communities (Baillie Smith et al., 2013). As young people transition to adulthood, the development of their Christian faith through these experiences impacted upon their understanding of faith for the future (Hopkins et al., 2015). What can be gained from this is a recognition of the porosity of sacred and secular spaces, and considering religion beyond traditionally sacred spaces therefore provides an opportunity for further research to appreciate the role of religion and faith in people’s daily lives.

Religion as a part of a person’s identity is significant, but this can be taken further. Attention in the geography of religion is increasingly turning to how a person’s religiosity, faith and/or spirituality are more than an identity and have the potential to impact upon every aspect of a person’s life. For example, Sutherland (2017) has discussed how there has been increasing attention to the religious subject within the context of the role of religion in the construction of meaning and everyday practices. Sutherland argues that we need to take this further in order to explicitly explore the religious subject in relation to the transcendent, one reason being in order to give attention to how the religious subject produces theology daily. This is important because it leads us to a recognition that religion, faith and spirituality can be performed by the acting subject. Overall, then, religious performances can take place in any space. To illustrate this breadth of geographical enquiry on religious performance: Holloway (2013) considers performance in a structured worship space, Maddrell and Scriven (2016) as referenced above take performance into the rural landscapes of pilgrimage, and A. Williams (2016; 2017) scrutinises religious performance in a Pentecostal addiction rehabilitation centre. In this respect, the key concerns of the geographies of religion are continuing to evolve. Cumulatively these discussions have taken attention in the geography

of religion away from a single focus on spaces of worship, to research that looks at the role that religion and faith play in people's daily lives.

This research follows attention to faith being performed throughout a person's daily life in the specific context of the practising of faith through a person volunteering. As I expand upon in Chapter Three, I follow the notion of faith over religion in order to emphasise the implications of a personal relationship between a person and God, rather than the practising of religion in an institutional sense (Brace et al., 2011). Just as sacred and secular spaces are porous, so faith identities and subjectivities can be thought of as porous, particularly when a person understands their faith as impacting upon their actions throughout their daily life; in other words faith porously affects a person's daily life. The implications of this reiterate from Chapter One how this research can focus on faith in volunteering not but assume its priority. This is because the role of faith in people's volunteering experiences at Lunch is emergent from volunteers' narratives, so where faith is prioritised as a motivation, this reflects the significance put upon faith by volunteers. However, reflecting the porosity of faith subjectivities, the analysis of faith is not in isolation to other parts of a person's volunteering experience. In being a relational conceptualisation, affect theory is an ideal means through which to focus upon faith emerging from volunteers' narratives, but understand it in relation to other aspects of their motivation and experience.

### *3.2. The Place of Religion and Faith in Society*

The second key theme which I focus on is the place of religion in society. This is often framed through the notions of secularisation and post-secularisation as the role of faith groups in public space is debated. This is a debate which can be understood as stemming from the work of sociologists including Max Weber, Émile Durkheim (Knippenberg, 2015), and Jürgen Habermas (for example Habermas, 2006; Habermas, 2011a; 2011b), and has been taken up by a variety of geographers. Both secularisation and post-secularisation are contested terms (C. Baker and Beaumont, 2011; Tse, 2013).

This said, secularisation is broadly understood as an argument that the role and influence of religion in society is declining at the societal and/or individual level (Bruce, 2002; Romanillos et al., 2012; Knippenberg, 2015). Declining statistical attendance, for example of church congregations, is taken as evidence to support the secularisation thesis (Davie, 2015). As a thesis it gained strength in the UK in the 1960s after a decline in the influence of religion upon the state with the introduction of the welfare state (Catto, 2014), whilst Habermas (2006) has focussed upon secularisation in the context of Western Europe over the relationship between religion and the state. Pabst (2011) raises what he calls a paradox of



faith: the notion of secularisation has its origins in the Judeo-Christian tradition of separating the secular and sacred (particularly in terms of authority), yet presently it is used to argue for the demise of religion. This could be perceived as reinstating the binary between the religious and secular, yet Pabst also argues that religions play a role in maintaining the secular, again showing a crossover between these two groups and spaces. Geographers of religion continue to contribute to this debate, for example Knippenberg (2015) recently argued using data from the European Values Survey that Europe as a whole has provided an example of secularisation since the Second World War through a decline in religious practice, religious attendance, and (to a lesser extent) religious belief. Secularisation theses have hence argued religion has a dwindling role to play in society.

However, secularisation is not the only thesis on the role that religion plays (or does not play) in society. In recent years post-secularisation theses have questioned the conclusions of secularisation which has proved to be a controversial debate (Cloke, 2015). Most prominently, Habermas (2006; 2011a; 2011b) has argued Western Europe is moving towards post-secularisation. In Habermas' articulation post-secularisation presents a renewed role of religion in society, particularly beyond traditionally sacred spaces (Habermas, 2006; Romanillos et al., 2012). This contrasts to the view that religion is increasingly being viewed as an individual concern (for example as critically observed by Latour, 2001).

Post-secularisation has implications for relationships between people, with a need for tolerance of different beliefs (Habermas, 2011a). Bompani's (2013) work on the role of churches in responding to xenophobic violence in South Africa in 2008 provides an ideal example of how religious organisations continue to play a role in the public sphere, as well as how sacred and secular spaces overlap. Bompani shows that South African churches played a crucial role in the 2008 violence by providing refugees with shelter and food in the church buildings. What this shows is churches playing a role in the public sphere – with humanitarian aid – in a space that would traditionally be considered a sacred space, but here plays a public function. Secondly, Luz (2013) has shown the role that religious shrines can play in contributing to political debates. Luz's example of shrines in Israel and the potential political difficulties of these for Muslim minorities further demonstrates the current role that religion plays in the public sphere. This work therefore shows the overlap of the sacred and secular as a contributing factor to debates around post-secularisation. Thirdly, building upon the work of Habermas, geographers Paul Cloke and Justin Beaumont have explored the concept of post-secular rapprochement through the example of faith-based social action (Cloke and Beaumont, 2012; Cloke, 2015). Here post-secular rapprochement

uses Habermas' ideas around translation and crossover to show how faith-based social action can bring people of different beliefs together to give positive results around understanding and cohesion. This emphasises the connection between post-secular debates and faith motivated voluntary sector activity (Cloke, 2015). I signpost here to Chapter Three where I bring together the geography of religion and the empirical focus of this research: responding to food poverty. The concept of postsecularity is also useful here (Cloke, 2015). Whilst post-secularisation emphasises a process over time, postsecularity accentuates the spaces and subjectivities within the post-secular. This is useful to highlight how faith-based organisations are acting within space and volunteers are acting as religious subjects.

However, what is also significant in debates around secularisation and post-secularisation is the concept of scale: neither of these theses have universal empirical evidence across the globe (Dunn and Piracha, 2015). This has led some to question whether either thesis can be followed (Pabst, 2011), or if the only reliable trend is one of diversity (Dunn and Piracha, 2015). Pabst (2011) and Ley and Tse (2013) (amongst others) have also argued that whilst there is a decline in religious practice in some countries in the global North, in terms of the number of people, this is more than being replaced by increasing religious adherence in the global South. This growth in adherence is to both traditional religions, and to other spiritual groups. Furthermore, Ley and Tse (2013) show how immigration from the global South to North is also resulting in an increase and diversity of religious adherents across the global North. The situation is therefore complex and not easily modelled in one single thesis. A further question to the post-secularisation theses has been highlighted by geographers of religion: is it a re-emergence or continuation of religion in society (for example Kong, 2010)? Whilst Kong argues for the latter, the answer to this question can vary according to scale, religion, and space: "The only reliable trend is that of diverse trajectories" (Dunn and Piracha, 2015, 1642).

Whilst questioning the role of religion in society, a key call across work in the geography of religion has been for greater public relevance and dissemination (for example by Kong, 2011; Olson et al., 2013). Indeed, Davie (2015) has suggested that the British public is losing its vocabulary with which to discuss religion. If present day tensions over religion and culture are to be resolved, then this lack of vocabulary needs addressing. The geography of religion is well placed to respond to this lack of vocabulary through its combination of approaching religion empirically and philosophically (Korf, 2006), with a potential for public engagement. In this research I recognise the importance of public relevance and dissemination and turn to this in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Overall the role of religion in society is therefore questioned through the ongoing debates of secularisation and post-secularisation. Secularisation theses have argued that religion's role in society has declined and eventually will cease to exist. However, in recent years post-secular theses have developed in prominence, arguing that the role of religion in society is increasing once again (for example through faith-based social action and welfare provision), or that the role of religion did not decline to the extent once proposed in secularisation theses. What is crucial to these debates is the space and scale in question, leading to a strong argument that diversity is the only thesis with strength. These are important questions for how the operation of society, and the role of religion within this, is understood. I move in Chapter Three to identify how this research addresses these questions through Christians responding to food poverty: specifically, I will find that faith-based social action is increasingly playing a role in UK welfare provision.

#### **4. Affect Theory and the Geography of Religion**

Affect theory is increasingly being used as an analytical tool in the geography of religion. This is an approach that I look to contribute towards and take forward in this research. Approaches using affect theory and religion have largely focussed upon practice and performances in faith contexts, using affect theory to analyse these experiences. I highlight recent work in the UK context to illustrate this approach and to show how a person's religious faith can be considered as an affect because their faith impacts upon their capacity to act. I narrow the context of this research to Christianity in order to build upon this trend of Christian faith-based research, whilst recognising that other religions/faiths also undertake faith-based action.

First, is J-D Dewsbury and Paul Cloke's (2009) consideration of spiritual landscapes as spaces which are manifest through practices, happenings and existence. Dewsbury and Cloke (2009, 699) argue that within this notion of a spiritual landscape, for each acting person there is a "performance of believing". This is significant in showing the link between space and embodiment, and how faith can be translated into action. This can be followed with the question of this thesis; how does this action come about? Secondly, Andrew Williams (2016) applies Dewsbury and Cloke's concept of a spiritual landscape to analyse the experience of users of a Christian therapeutic drug rehabilitation centre. What is found here is how residents at the centre were affected differently by the same acts of worship. Williams' analysis of this space as a spiritual landscape allows an appreciation that bodies can be affected by other bodies that are not physically present (for example by people's

belief in God). The implications of Williams' work for this thesis are that it highlights the importance of affection, as well as affect: bodies can be affected differently by the same action, and affected by their belief in God. This thesis will show the importance of affection in understanding how the body acts because it is this which allows the body to increase its capacity to act. Thirdly, Julian Holloway (2011a; 2013) has considered affect as a means to explore a Christian understanding of hope, and as a means to recognise the performative aspect of religious experience. Holloway uses the example of someone raising their arm as an act of worship in a church service to show how an action can have more meaning to the actor than is immediately represented in that individual action. Therefore, when the action is understood through affect we can begin to identify its meaning to the actor beyond the physical movement. What will I take forward from these examples is first, to emphasise that through affect we can understand how people can be motivated by their Christian faith to act in a specific way, for instance to participate in faith-based social action, and secondly, how that action can have a different meaning to that person (compared to another person) because of their faith.

The key themes identified in the geography of religion – religion and faith as performed in daily life, and the place of religion and faith in society – are therefore brought together in the understanding that people can be motivated by religious faith to take part in social action and respond to social injustice (Cloke, 2011b). Faith-motivated social action takes religious experience and thought beyond traditionally thought of sacred spaces to play a wider role in society. I advocate that it is here that the advantages of a non-representational approach to faith-based research becomes apparent: when people help those in need through faith motivated convictions, then there is more in responding to need than immediately represented in the act itself. For example, Cloke et al. (2005) explore how people involved in projects responding to homelessness which are motivated by a Christian ethos may also hope to convert people to Christianity. Yet this desire for conversion is not necessarily explicit – or represented – in the action undertaken of responding to homelessness (for example giving food). An affective approach through non-representational theories allows this “more-than” dimension (of not only responding to need) to be explored and highlighted, making it an ideal approach for analysing faith. This is because if Christian faith is understood as the relationship between a person and (their) God (Brace et al., 2011), then to a degree (their) God becomes manifest through humans acting out that faith motivation in real world situations. Consequently that action is about something more-than is represented in the world, which as the earlier example of Cloke et al.'s (2008) work on affect and homelessness shows, can be highlighted in an empirical analysis through affect. We need therefore to explore the relationship between the transcendent and the human subject

(Sutherland, 2017). Hence, when these actions are interpreted and analysed through affect theory, more can be learnt about the experience than otherwise may have been possible, including how the human subject's relationship with God can be actualised in experience, but not necessarily represented. An affective approach to analyse empirical experience in the geography of religion is therefore advantageous because it shows the performance and embodiment of religious experience (Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009), allows an appreciation that bodies are affected by those who are not physically present/represented (as shown by A. Williams, 2016), and shows the "more-than" and additional meaning an action can have for a person, beyond what is represented in the physical action (Holloway, 2011a; 2013).

Following this first advantage, an affective approach to the geography of religion is furthermore advantageous in that it allows religion and faith to be given a greater ontological status in research. Too frequently in human geography, faith has been engaged with on unequal terms both through affect and in wider geographical enquiry (Korf, 2006; Ley and Tse, 2013). Catherine Brace reflects on this inequality in Bailey et al. (2008, 260):

...the question... is whether geography can adequately report spiritual encounters when it often radically undermines the ontological status of these encounters in seeking to reduce them to a metaphysic of naturalism, and materialism.

I argue with Brace that the ontological and theological status of religious and spiritual experience is often undermined in geographical enquiry. Undermined is used here to mean that rather than religion or faith being recognised as ontologies, more often they are reduced purely to a materialist dimension of identity or performance. Yet when religious belief influences a person to act, then that belief must be emphasised in relation to the action (Stump, 2008), and given a degree of ontological status. It is by recognising that faith-motivated action can have more meaning than what is represented in the action, that affect theory can raise the ontological status of faith in research. Echoing the foundation of the faith-based social action project undertaken, throughout this research I refer to 'God' to mean the Christian understanding and belief of God. However, as Williams (2016) argues, faith-based research is not about affirming (or denying) belief in (a) God. This is important to acknowledge in making a distinction between the geography of religion and theology (although there is an increasing overlap, for example Sutherland, 2017), as well as maintaining the academic rigor of the discipline which is growing despite critiques that religion is not a subject worthy of discussion in geography (as earlier referenced).

Thirdly, affect theory can be an advantageous approach to the geography of religion in relation to the researcher's positionality. There is a strong argument for making the researcher's religious positionality explicit, and this being a shared religiosity with research

participants. Subsequently in Chapter Five I will frame positionality within the action research methodology: that my positionality entailed relative privilege and power, but also had multiple, temporally changing elements including shared Christian faith. Here I take up discussion within the geography of religion on a researcher's religious positionality in relation to their research participants, and show how this adds to an affective approach. Over a decade ago TR Slater (2004, 246) commented that the geography of religion is often approached from the "outside":

It is also notable that such explorations [in recent developments in the geography of religion cited by Kong (2001)] are almost always from the outside looking in; few geographers speak as "insiders" when writing about religious geography from whatever faith tradition...

This call for research in the geography of religion through shared positionality has been repeated in the last decade, for example by Olson et al. (2013) in the introduction to *Religion and place: landscape, politics and piety*. Particularly when combined with a participatory methodology (for example by A. Williams, 2016), this shared understanding of religious meaning can give the researcher a different way of understanding participants' lives. As with any research, it is also important that the researcher remains critical, so as to avoid critiques (for example see Lancione, 2014) that religious geographers perceive a romanticised version of events, for example in faith-based organisation provision. I would respond that such a critique (for example by Lancione) is unjustified because any framework (religious or otherwise) could be uncritically deployed, and there is no reason to single out religion in this way. Indeed, a shared religious positionality between the researcher and participants combined with an affective approach can give a valuable insight. This is because approaching faith-based research with a shared faith with research participants can give an insight and understanding that otherwise may not have been possible because parts of experience that were "more-than-representational" may not otherwise be recognised by the researcher (Lorimer, 2005; Bailey et al., 2008). Therefore, when also approaching analysis of faith-based experience through affect theory, as I have already established, the researcher is able to move beyond representation to the "more-than" of this world, and the meaning of religiously motivated action which is "more-than" the primary action. For example, Olson (2008) discusses how sharing a learned affinity of the Roman Catholic faith in her research with Peruvian faith-based development groups gave her the means to participate in the activities with a distinct level of assurance through that shared understanding. A person of shared faith can therefore have a different affective capacity to be affected – and to then interpret – religious experience, compared to a researcher who does not share a religious faith with research participants.

Overall, an affect theory approach is advantageous for faith-based research because it allows researchers, particularly when combined with shared faith positionality, to engage with how it is that when a person is motivated by their faith to act, that this action has more meaning than what is represented in the action itself (by virtue of faith linking a person to the external being of God). By engaging with the “more-than” representational meaning of experience in this way, affect theory can engage with faith in a way that raises the ontological status of faith in research. This is an advantage that this thesis enlists, and takes forward in the context of faith-based volunteering and food poverty responses.

## **5. Conclusions**

In conclusion, this research brings together non-representational theories and the geography of religion to advocate and utilise an affective approach to faith-based research. This is for three main reasons, to which I add an additional two after the discussion in Chapter Four. First, affect theory enables an analysis of faith-motivated action that recognises that there is more in this action than what is transiently emergent in the world, highlighting that faith-motivated social action involves a belief in a God that is “more-than” what is immediately represented in the action. Secondly, I follow others that faith has not widely been engaged with on equal terms through affect theory and wider geographical enquiry. However, this approach provides the opportunity to give both faith and affect ontological status because rather than reducing religious belief or faith simply to a marker of identity, research can engage with the meaning that it holds for faith-motivated subjects as being “more-than” what is represented. Thirdly, in doing so I recognise the importance of the researcher making clear their religious/faith positionality. I have argued that approaching the geography of religion from an ‘insiders’ position can give a level of understanding and resonance that otherwise would not be possible. This is not to say that others who do not share a faith cannot undertake research in this discipline. Rather this is to say that through affect a person of shared faith is affected differently – and has a different affective capacity – in researching their own faith, giving a different affective insight to that experience.

Within non-representational theories I focus in this research upon affect theory. Focussing upon Spinoza directly – as opposed to the mainstream attention to Spinoza through Deleuze – highlights affect as a concept around the body’s power of acting, and the capacity of a body to act as it affects and is affected. Both affect and affection are important here because they allow appreciation of a body’s state, and change in state over time (affection), as well as how bodies impact upon (affect) each other. Although interpretations since Spinoza have argued for a consideration of human and non-human bodies, Spinoza

emphasises affect as relating to human bodies. I build upon this understanding of affect theory in Chapter Four as I question how, through affect, the acting body comes to act.

Having established affect theory conceptually, a challenge remains over how to apply this to specific circumstances. I will extend this conversation further in Chapter Five, taking this forward with participatory geographies and action research. Here, however, I have emphasised the possibilities and experimentation of utilising affect theory in practice. In particular I have highlighted the importance of maintaining theoretical rigour in empirical use, rather than leaving affect to be inferred within analysis.

The geography of religion has changed considerably in recent decades, moving from a marginalised position in human geography concerned with the spatiality of religion, to a more dynamic discipline that explores religion in a social context. There are two foci in the geography of religion that I have prioritised for this research. First is a focus that explores religion and faith as performed in people's daily lives. I have reached this understanding through moving beyond worship spaces and a binary of sacred and secular spaces because spaces have different meanings for different people. This takes research beyond religion as a part of a person's identity to understand how it is a part of their being and their subjectivity. The second key focus I have given attention to in the geography of religion is the place of religion and faith in society. I have explored this through secularisation and post-secularisation debates bringing sociology together with the geography of religion. I will build upon this key theme in Chapter Three through the importance of faith groups in responding to inequality, at times providing where the state is not. Through both themes the role of faithful subjects is crucial. This is because it is through people acting, each motivated by their personal faith, that performances and the significance of religion and faith can be understood as extending beyond worship spaces, and as playing a wider role in post-secular society. To reiterate, it is through action – action being understood through affect theory – that religion and faith become present in space. This research looks to gain such an insight in responding to food poverty through faith-motivated social action, which I now turn to.





## **Chapter Three. Responding to Food Poverty through Faith**

### **1. Introduction**

Food poverty is a phenomenon to which there has been a rapidly growing social action response, particularly through faith-based organisations. Responding to food poverty is the empirical basis of this research, through which I argue for, and implement, an affective approach to faith-based research. The acting body is crucial here because it is through the body that social action takes place. This builds upon key themes in the geography of religion: the role that religion and faith can play in people's daily lives, and in society. That the geography of religion can focus upon (responses to) growing inequality globally and nationally is an indication of its relevance and importance within wider geographies and research as a whole (Kong, 2010).

In this chapter I explore three key themes which together form this faith response to inequality. First I explore the phenomenon of food poverty. I begin with how food poverty can be understood through three components; affordability, accessibility and nutrition. I will argue that food poverty is a contentious political issue because it is framed within the retracting welfare state and faith-based organisations stepping into provision but also activism. From this I move to one angle of food poverty: holiday hunger. Holiday hunger is when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays, one of the reasons being free school meals are not available. This research is focussed on a project responding to holiday hunger through a Christian-based organisation, MakeLunch. This leads to the second theme of this chapter: an explication of the concepts of religion and faith. What is the difference between religion and faith, and is there a politics to this difference? I will build an understanding of religion in the sense of religious institutions and faith as a more personal relationship between an individual and their belief in God, which results in action. From this follows the chapter's third theme: responding to need through faith-based organisations. It is this third theme which links together the first and second themes; people of religious faith are responding to food poverty. In this section I first take a step back to consider the context in which faith-based organisations operate with religious affiliation statistically declining in the UK, and accordingly how Christian faith-based organisations are increasingly active as examples of post-secularity in the UK. From this I will question what is a faith-based organisation? Through their characteristics, projects and overall types, I will argue that faith-based organisations are varied, and that the role of individuals as well as collective organisations are important in the affective role of faith in how organisations operate.

At this point it is helpful to reiterate the specificities of this research. The focus is upon a faith-based organisation (MakeLunch) that is Christian, and addresses holiday hunger in the UK. The context is therefore set within UK food poverty which is distinct, for example, to the USA context (for example see Fisher, 2017) by the UK having a heavily involved welfare state. In this respect, much research into UK food poverty has focussed upon food banks (for example Lambie-Mumford, 2015; Garthwaite, 2016; Cloke et al., 2017), whereas this thesis focuses upon a project responding to holiday hunger where ‘recipients’ eat together rather than taking food home with a food bank. This research’s focus therefore contributes to a wider understanding of food poverty responses in the UK beyond food banks. The focus is also affected through my running a project through a Christian-based organisation as opposed to another faith. In the Chapter Eight I expand upon how this research approach could fruitfully be extended to explore multi-faith responses to food poverty. Furthermore, whilst recognising that these are overlapping terms, the focus of this research is upon people’s faith rather than religion. This is because focussing on faith will allow the research to engage with how a person’s relationship with God plays out – is performed – in their daily life, rather than through an institutional religious setting that is perhaps more likely to emphasise worship practices. In turn, such action – specifically here volunteering – will be understood through affect theory in order to ascertain the meaning that actions can have that is “more-than” what is represented in the action (Lorimer, 2005, 84). Affect theory is relational and so in the subsequent thesis analysis where faith is emphasised as significant, this is emergent through volunteers’ own emphasis on faith in their narratives, and recognised alongside other affects in how volunteers have capacity to act and persist in acting.

I conclude the chapter that the empirical setting for this research – faith-based organisations responding to holiday hunger – bridges across the key foci identified in the geography of religion. This is because by emphasising the actions of individuals within a faith-based organisation, religious subjects (which to focus on faith I will call faithful subjects) move beyond worship spaces for faith to play a wider role in society. Secondly, by focussing on acting faithful subjects – Lunch volunteers – this research also contributes to affective geographies in exploring how people come to act. Finally, this research has importance in gaining understanding of responses to holiday hunger. This is significant for both policy making, and voluntary organisations who rely upon volunteers to make their work sustainable.

## **2. Food Poverty**

What is food poverty? Defining and measuring poverty is problematic, not least because there are multiple factors involved in poverty which can be situation specific and relative (Beall and Fox, 2009; Milbourne, 2010). Food poverty is one angle of poverty which is no less challenging. Referring to food poverty is not to separate this as a distinct 'type' of poverty from other dimensions of poverty. It is quite possible – or indeed likely – that a person experiencing food poverty is also experiencing poverty in other ways. Rather, to refer to food poverty is to put focus on the consideration of food as one aspect of poverty. The UK Department of Health (2005) defines food poverty as a person being in a situation in which they lack any/all of three main components: affordable food, access to food, and nutritionally valuable food. In this way, food poverty is understood as a multi-dimensional issue (Sonnino and Hanmer, 2016), which can be distinct from an absolute lack of food or starvation.

Food poverty is intrinsically linked to inequality and people's vulnerability (J. Baker, 2008; Beall and Fox, 2009). Indeed, outside the UK, food poverty is more commonly called food insecurity. This can be advantageous in that the term 'food insecurity' arguably is more explicit in recognising food as a basic human right, as a political issue, and it links the individual to policy and social security/insecurity (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015a). As I am writing in the UK context I keep to the term food poverty, but have given a multi-dimensional understanding of food poverty, which is similar to food insecurity. Increasingly, then, within research and policy making, poverty is being understood in relation to people's livelihoods, thereby recognising that sustainability is a crucial concern in the experience and overcoming of poverty (Beall and Fox, 2009). The urban and Global North are increasingly being recognised as avenues requiring attention to understand food poverty and insecurity (Morgan, 2015).

Building upon these issues, a dominant approach both within and outside geography is a rights-based approach. Rights-based approaches argue that the UK government has failed to ensure individuals have food security; this being the opposite of food insecurity when:

...all people, at all times, have physical, economic and social access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

(Riches, 2002 cited in Dowler and O'Connor, 2012, 45).

Key proponents, Dowler and O'Connor, highlight two conventions which they argue that the UK government has neglected to fulfil: UN General Comments 12 and 14 show that the state

should ensure access to food (14) and individuals have a right to food (12), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights gives individuals the right to physically and economically accessible food. The right to food is hence distinct to the right to be fed, it is about feeding oneself with dignity, and food being available, accessible and adequate (United Nations Human Rights, 2010). A rights-based approach therefore puts strong emphasis on the state as being responsible for resolving food poverty. I return to this momentarily in comparison to voluntary sector welfare provision – proponents of a rights-based approach have argued that voluntary sector responses to food poverty should stop because, in their argument, these allow the state to evade its duty. For now, I emphasise the importance of the state in relation to understanding food poverty. Starting with this multi-dimensional understanding of food poverty, first I will examine the growth of food poverty in the UK and how this is related to the retraction of the welfare state and growing faith-based social action. Secondly, I move to the empirical focus of this research: holiday hunger. Holiday hunger is one specific angle of food poverty relating to a lack of food for children in the school holidays. I will find that as food poverty is becoming increasingly prevalent in the UK, it is a contested issue both politically and by religious groups, with varying responses from the welfare state and faith-based organisations.

### 2.1. *Growing UK Food Poverty and the Retracting Welfare State*

Chronic poverty refers to the persistence of poverty over time (Hulme and McKay, 2005). Over a decade ago Hulme and McKay (2005) at the *Chronic Poverty Research Institute* argued that in both research and policy making there is a need to more adequately address chronic poverty. Food poverty is becoming increasingly prevalent in the UK. It has increased both in its occurrence in people's everyday lives and as a research focus across the social sciences. This is particularly evident since the 2008 financial crisis as health and wealth inequalities have widened (Dowler and O'Connor, 2012; Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015b).

A picture of the scale of UK food poverty can be gained through foodbank use – whilst recognising that this is just one angle and not everyone experiencing food poverty will use a foodbank. In 2000 the first Trussell Trust foodbank was established in Salisbury, and there are now over 440 foodbanks in the Trussell Trust network (Trussell Trust, 2016d). Between 2008 and 2009, Trussell Trust foodbanks gave over 25,000 emergency food parcels (one parcel being three days' worth of food), and between 2015 and 2016 this had increased to over one million food parcels (Trussell Trust, 2016b). The latest Trussell Trust statistics for 2015/16 show an increase in foodbank use in the UK by 2% compared to the previous year (Trussell Trust, 2016b). This may seem a small rise, but it shows the continued and

increasing use of foodbanks in UK public life. The Trussell Trust is only one of many – although the largest – foodbank providers in the UK. Other nationwide reports have matched these statistics on the scale of the issue: a weighted, representative British survey commissioned by the *Church Urban Fund* found that one in fifty adults – 2% of the British population had used a food bank in 2016 (Denning and Buckingham, 2017). That amounts to approximately 1,270,000 people in Great Britain using food banks which places overall food bank use higher than the estimates from the Trussell Trust. Overall, then, food poverty has reached unprecedented levels which have not been seen since the introduction of the welfare state (APPG Hunger, 2014).

Food poverty is intrinsically related to inequality. UK datasets from Defra show that people in lower income families increasingly have diets which are calorific but not nutritionally balanced (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015a). Food poverty in this instance is not about the amount of food consumed, but about access to, and affordability of, nutritionally valuable food. The average UK household spends 25% of their income on food, fuel and housing, the wealthiest spend 17%, and the poorest spend 41% of their income on food, fuel and housing (APPG Hunger, 2016). The inequality in food poverty is therefore further shown by the amount of income which lower and higher income households spend on average on food. The implications of food poverty hence extend beyond hunger to affect people's participation in society. For example, *Church Urban Fund* research found that in 2016 one in ten British adults missed participating in a celebration because they could not afford to take part (Denning and Buckingham, 2017). The Trussell Trust (2016a) has highlighted state benefit delays, low income, and state benefit changes are the three highest causes of people using their foodbanks. These welfare changes have mainly occurred since 2008 as the government has aimed to reduce the public spending budget (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015a). The All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Hunger (2015) mirrors these as significant causes of food poverty, but adds to the list:

1. Benefit payment delays and benefit sanctions
2. Benefit changes
3. Low income and therefore vulnerability (and lack of financial resilience)
4. Costs of moving from welfare to work (and waiting a month for wages to be paid)
5. Changes to tax credits (which top up low wages)
6. School holidays – holiday hunger when children do not have free school meals
7. The rising cost of living which is not matched by rising wages, including the high cost of gas and electricity on pre-paid meters compared to contracts

All of these points – except perhaps the last – are related to the welfare state. However, despite multiple all-party independent investigations, the UK government has continued to

deny that there is a link between welfare reform and the increase in UK food poverty (Garthwaite, 2016). The government has also resisted UN pressure to integrate conventions on food poverty into UK law (Dowler and O'Connor, 2012), and instead food poverty is more commonly understood as a private problem (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015b). This can be understood in the context of a social contract: the relationship between the people and the state around what each can expect from each other (Unwin, 2015). A rights-based approach argues that this social contract is not being met for the people. Further problematising the issue, public understanding of food poverty has not been helped by negative stereotypes and stigma of people who experience food poverty (Garthwaite, 2016). Negative stereotypes have been heightened by the media for example Murphy and Manning (2014, in the Mail on Sunday). The causes of increasing UK food poverty are therefore fiercely contested between the government and research/the voluntary sector.

Significant players in responding to food poverty are religious groups, which have influenced the welfare state since its establishment. Understanding food poverty is intrinsically related to wider understanding of the operation of the welfare state. I therefore broaden the discussion in this context, before narrowing down again to food poverty. The UK welfare state was established in the 1940s (Sentamu, 2015a)s. Whilst there are multiple trajectories which can be traced on the conditions that led to the formation of the welfare state, the principles on which the welfare state was founded are fundamentally Christian, partly due to the political influence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple (Sentamu, 2015a; 2015b). It is here that the relationship between religion, the (welfare) state, and food poverty starts to unfold. Archbishop Temple advocated three social principles for societal care to be based around: first freedom (social justice; freedom from interference and domination), secondly fellowship (humans are mutually dependent), and thirdly service (humans should seek collective well-being rather than that of the self) (Sentamu, 2015a). Yet despite this Christian foundation, the welfare state is commonly presented as having replaced institutional religion with the state as the carer of citizens (Woodhead, 2012). This may have been true to some degree in the early decades after the welfare state was established, however, since the 1970s changes in the welfare state, Christianity (and other faiths) has been able to re-enter service provision (Dinham and Jackson, 2012; Davie, 2015). Significantly, religious groups have also challenged the government and entered the debate around (food) poverty. Hence, not only has the relationship between food poverty and the UK government been contested, but so has the relationship between the state and religion. Consequently this builds upon one of the key concerns in the geography of religion: the role of religion in society, particularly here in relation to welfare provision. To full understand food poverty I now explore the relationship between religion and the state in more depth.

Whilst secularisation theses have argued that religion and the state are increasingly separate (Bruce, 2002), it is not a new phenomenon in the UK for religious groups to challenge the state on the existence of poverty. Two examples from the Church of England – the established church in England – show this. First, in 1984 the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission of Urban Priority Areas published a report titled *Faith in the City. A Call for Action by Church and State*. This report contentiously criticised the existence of poverty in many UK cities and argued that the government was not doing enough to respond to this. Following this report the *Church Urban Fund* was founded by the Church of England in an attempt for the church to be more active and focused in responding to social inequality (Lawless et al., 1998). Secondly, and more recently, prior to the UK 2015 General Election the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu (2015c), published an edited collection *On Rock or Sand?* in which he argued that religion and politics should not be separate, and that more than politics is needed to resolve societal problems. This was followed by a letter from the House of Bishops (2015) to members of the Church of England. This letter again criticised a division between religion and politics, and challenged the state of UK politics. The letter proved controversial both amongst politicians and with the media, including the then Prime Minister Cameron defending the UK political and economic situation (for example see Bingham and Riley-Smith (2015) in *The Telegraph*). This discussion shows the dynamic relationship between the Church of England and state in recent years, typical too amongst other religious groups, as religious groups have challenged the state over the existence and responses to UK poverty. Therefore, in order to understand UK food poverty, these debates must also be grasped.

Faith-based organisations have also reacted to UK food poverty by becoming welfare providers. One such example has been through the idea of the 'Big Society'. This was a policy pushed by Cameron in the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government 2010-2015, and to some degree by the Conservative government since 2015. The 'Big Society' advocated the role of local communities groups, including faith groups, in service provision (Lambie-Mumford and Jarvis, 2012). However, as highlighted in geographical conversation, this has proved a controversial policy. Geographer T Slater (2012b, 964) has argued that parts of the Conservative government purposely instigated public ignorance for understanding welfare reforms and the situation of people in poverty:

At the heart of the "Big Society" agenda is a deep-seated belief that the welfare state has run its course – the new obligation of British citizenship is to volunteer and donate (regardless of the ability to do so) in order to help vulnerable people change their ways.



The “Big Society” agenda has therefore been a contentious relationship between the state and voluntary sector. Indeed, a rights-based approach to food poverty finds state reliance upon the voluntary sector to respond to food poverty problematic, arguing that the causes of food poverty and inequality are then not addressed by the state (Dowler and O'Connor, 2012; Lambie-Mumford, 2017). Similarly, a rights-based approach finds the emphasis in society on emergency, charitable provision as precarious because this arguably depoliticises the problem, and can put further blame on the individual as the cause of the problem, rather than recognising structural causes (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford, 2015b). Rights-based arguments therefore encourage faith-based organisations to be involved in activism rather than provision, with some proponents going so far as to argue that voluntary sector food poverty provision should stop in order that the state cannot evade its duty to the citizen (Lambie-Mumford, 2015). In this way it can be questioned to what degree faith groups have become a means through which neoliberal agendas operate, for example the reliance in voluntary sector food provision upon the dominant food systems through supermarkets (Cloke, 2010; A. Williams et al., 2012). Questions can hence be asked over the degree to which the government has valued the faith element of these groups in their service provision (Dinham and Lowndes, 2009), and the degree to which faith groups have been complicit with government agendas.

However, a rights-based approach does not show the full story. Faith groups being involved in activism and provision are not mutually exclusive: faith-based organisations are increasingly being less of a part of what Cameron’s government hoped as ‘Big Society’, because they are challenging the state on the existence of food poverty as well as food provision (Buckingham and Jolley, 2015; Cloke et al., 2017). In this way faith-based organisations are not simply filling the gap in service provision, but are playing a role in confronting and resisting the state over social justice and food poverty (McCabe et al., 2016; O’Toole and Braginskaia, 2016). A prime example is the changing relationship between the government and the Trussell Trust (a Christian faith-based charity). The government’s position on the Trussell Trust changed from enthusiasm at the mobilisation of volunteers, to opposition of the Trussell Trust citing benefit delays/changes as a cause of poverty, with the government putting blame instead on individuals’ “dysfunctional lives” (Iain Duncan-Smith - Secretary of State for Work and Pensions 2010-2016 - cited in A. Williams et al., 2016, 2299). As opposed to simply being complicit or providers for the government, the Trussell Trust’s annual statistics on foodbank use are a key contribution to food poverty activism (Buckingham and Jolley, 2015; A. Williams et al., 2016). Indeed, faith-based organisations’ response can be understood as being “in the meantime” (Cloke et al., 2017, 1). This meantime is illustrated by CS Lewis (2012, 86), speaking in the 1940s but just as applicable

to the present day, when he argues that we should aim for a society where there is no one in need, “But if anyone thinks that, as a consequence, you can stop giving in the meantime, then he has parted company with all Christian morality”. Therefore, faith-based organisations responding to need in the present is not to condone the existence of need, but rather to provide in the present with a hope that change will occur in the near future (Cloke et al., 2017). This is mirrored by the call from the *Church Urban Fund* for approaches to food poverty to be ones that seek justice; longer term change for people experiencing poverty (Denning and Buckingham, 2017). The role and attitude of individual volunteers is also influential here. Cloke et al. (2017) find that foodbanks can be considered as spaces of care as well as provision, affectively performed by volunteers in their interactions with people attending the foodbanks. In this way foodbanks can be contested, political spaces, both in their relation to the state and how they are individually experienced by volunteers and service-users (A. Williams et al., 2016, 2306):

Far from acting as a “moral safety valve” that placated energies for political campaigning against the pernicious injustice of hunger in 21st-century Britain (Poppendieck, 1998), for some individuals volunteering invigorated a desire for wider structural change and social justice.

Being a faith-based organisation, many of the volunteers at this Trussell Trust foodbank are Christian. Their volunteering is therefore an acting out of their faith by responding to food poverty (A. Williams et al., 2016). In this way, volunteering can be understood as an affective performance, contributing to understanding in the geography of religion of faithful subjects – a point which I expand upon subsequently. How volunteers in faith-based organisations approach the giving of food is therefore important in understanding food poverty, as well as understanding the relationship between the state and welfare providers. It is the volunteering aspect of responding to food poverty which is the focus of this research in the context of volunteers responding to holiday hunger, an angle of food poverty which I turn to next.

## 2.2. *Holiday Hunger*

One specific dimension of food poverty is holiday hunger: when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays (APPG Hunger, 2017). Holiday hunger is a term used both by the UK voluntary sector, for example the national charity MakeLunch, and by state affiliated groups, for example the All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Hunger (APPG Hunger). There are 170 non-school days in the UK (compared to 195 school days) when children do not receive a free school meal, which for some children is their main meal of the day (APPG School Food, 2014).

There are no comprehensive measures or statistics for the numbers of children in the UK experiencing holiday hunger because the government has not put a method for recording these in place (APPG Hunger, 2017), and data collected by charities responding to holiday hunger is sporadic across the UK (APPG Hunger, 2015). However, what is known is that 1 million UK children receive free school meals, and a further 2 million children are not eligible for free school meals predominantly because their parents are working, but they still experience food poverty in term time, plus holiday hunger (APPG Hunger, 2017). Further adding to this evidence, foodbanks have seen an increase in their use over the school holidays (APPG Hunger, 2014; APPG School Food, 2014; Trussell Trust, 2016c) and one third of parents in Great Britain have skipped a meal in the holidays to allow their children to have enough to eat (Kelloggs, 2015). Recent analysis by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2017) found that in 2017 there were almost 400,000 more children in poverty in the UK compared to 2012/2013. This is the first substantial and sustained increase in child poverty in two decades.

The impacts of holiday hunger are therefore felt by both parents/guardians and children. There are clear health impacts from food poverty, but also evidence that children experiencing holiday hunger have lower educational attainment compared to their healthier counterparts after the summer holidays (APPG Hunger, 2017). Building upon this, it has also been argued that UK children have a relatively poor well-being compared to their counterparts in other similarly developed countries (England, 2015). This claim is made in reference to Unicef's (2014 cited in England, 2015) report which uses indicators including educational attainment, factors around mental well-being and substance misuse, and disease/premature death. In the report Unicef highlights children's inequality as being a key cause of this relatively poor well-being for UK children. A study by the American sociologist Caitlin Daniel (2016) in Boston, USA is apposite here in showing the complexity and implications of food poverty and holiday hunger. Daniel argues that there are implications on the affordability of food upon children developing new taste preferences. The study found that in poorer families, parents are more likely to buy foods that their children will not reject (which are typically calorie rich but nutritionally poor foods) because they cannot afford for the food to be wasted or for an alternative choice if the first is not eaten by their child(ren). This was not a concern in the same way for more wealthy families in the study where children could have several options of foods. The result of this is children in poorer families are less likely to develop different taste preferences and try new foods, for example fruit and vegetables. Fruit and vegetables are also typically more expensive in terms of calorie intake when compared to less nutritionally balanced, sugar and carbohydrate rich foods (Daniel, 2016). The study therefore provides a clear illustration of the inequalities and complexity of

food poverty, and the impact that being in food poverty can make upon choices and future health and nutrition. In this way, children and adults being in food poverty through their current lack of access to food, poor nutritional value of food being eaten, and/or the low affordability of food can impact upon the future likelihood of (still) being in food poverty.

There are a number of charities – many being faith-based organisations – which are responding to holiday hunger. Some integrate this into their overall programme, for example the Trussell Trust giving food to more families at its foodbanks in the school holidays compared to term time (Trussell Trust, 2016c). Other charities focus specifically on holiday hunger, for example MakeLunch. MakeLunch is a Christian charity which has projects across Britain that provide a free, hot and healthy meal (often with a time of play) to children in the school holidays (MakeLunch, 2017). This research is based around the volunteer experience of establishing and running one MakeLunch project over 20 months. I expand upon the detail of this in Chapter Five to show how I have combined elements of participatory geographies, ethnography and action research, with affective geographies and the geography of religion. Here I echo Garthwaite (2016) *Hunger Pains. Life inside Foodbank Britain* who endeavoured to reflect the reality of people's experiences in and around poverty through ethnographic research methodology at a foodbank in Stockton-On-Tees. In this research, I therefore look to move beyond the statistics of food poverty to the daily experiences of responding to poverty. There is a lack of research into holiday hunger, and in particular research that focusses upon how people are responding it, and so this thesis contributes towards that research gap.

### 2.3. *Moving Forward*

What can be taken forward from these debates? First, food poverty is clearly placed within wider debates on the role of the welfare state, and the relationship between religious groups and the state. Faith-based organisations responding to food poverty are not simply vehicles of the state, but through their provision can also take part in activism and challenge the state to do more to end UK food poverty. Secondly, the individual motivations and experiences of volunteers are important in how food poverty is understood and acted upon, and this requires further attention in research (Clope et al., 2017). Through the affective performances of volunteers, faithful subjects bring together faith and politics in responding to food poverty. Thirdly, holiday hunger is one specific angle of food poverty: when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays. Responding to holiday hunger forms the empirical basis of this research through running a MakeLunch project. Through this food poverty, affective action, and faith motivations are brought together to contribute directly to both affective geographies and the geography of religion.

Cumulatively, there is a close relationship between food poverty, faith-based organisations and the welfare state. The remainder of this chapter turns to how to understand religion and faith, and then faith-based organisations. Through this I build up a more comprehensive picture on the state of religion in the UK – and how faith-based organisations and their volunteers are acting.

### **3. Religion and Faith**

Both religion and faith are significant in how groups and individuals respond to UK food poverty, particularly in the context of the retracting welfare state. What though is the difference between religion and faith? And is there a politics in this difference? Religion and faith are fundamental concepts to the geography of religion, and for people whose daily lives are constructed through being religious/having faith. Yet there not unanimous agreement on whether religion and faith are distinct concepts (NCVO, 2007), or overlapping terms (Baillie Smith et al., 2013). Indeed, Brace et al. (2011, 3) argue that faith, belief and religion are three elements of religious experience which are inter-related: religion as a belief system (for example doctrine); belief as the “intellectual maxims” which an individual follows; and faith as the relationship between a believer and God. To be able to more comprehensively understand religious and faith-based responses to food poverty I now take religion and faith in turn to build up working definitions to take forward. I will find an understanding of religion in an institutional sense refers to the major world religions and their belief in (a) God, and that faith is about personal commitment and the relationship between an individual and their belief in God. Religion and faith are not mutually exclusive, but do recognise a political distinction: religion as traditional doctrine, and faith as being more associated with action.

#### **3.1. Religion**

One way in which religion can be understood is to refer to institutional world religions and their belief systems or doctrines, for example Christianity or Islam (Brace et al., 2011). Religion can also be used to refer to groups within one religious institution; the different denominations including Catholicism and Anglicanism being examples within Christianity. However, contributing towards debates of post-secularisation, under Christianity there is also (variable) growth across the world in non-denominational churches. The significance here is to recognise that religious groups are increasingly diverse. They therefore cannot be simplified to one institution for each world religion in the traditional sense of the word.

Religion can mean that a person holds a different world view, as explored by Hart (2007, 49) in relation to phenomenology:

The believer will tell us that the parables of Jesus [God incarnate for Christians] are revelation itself, gloriously affirmed and confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus. The phenomenologist might understand the claim, but only the Christian will live within it. As I have highlighted in Chapter Two, it is a challenge for religion to be given an ontological status in itself in research. What is poignant here is that Hart's exploration conflates religion with belief, and also highlights the role of the individual. Is religion to be understood as an institution or as a collective of individuals? Increasingly religious groups are acknowledged as not being homogenous entities (McGuire, 2008). Religious beliefs and practices can therefore vary both within and between religious institutions as different groups and individuals interpret experiences and doctrine, and affectively perform their religious beliefs. Sara Miles is Director of Ministry at an episcopal church in San Francisco, USA where she also founded and directs a food pantry (this being similar to the UK understanding of a foodbank). Miles converted from staunch atheism to Christianity as an adult. Miles (2012a, 16) articulates religion "is a set of ideas about God". What is important for this thesis is that Miles understands faith as a means to go beyond the "set of ideas" that she associated religion with because faith is about the personal relationship between an individual and God, that then impacts upon how a person acts.

However, understood in the context of secularisation – a key focus in the geography of religion – religion can be perceived as an individual concern. As I have established in the previous chapter, this is because of debates over the role of religion in society and statistics around declining religious attendance in multiple countries (although not universally). Secularisation theses argue institutional religion is playing a decreasing role in society, remaining important only at an individual level, and this similarly is decreasing (Bruce, 2002; Romanillos et al., 2012; Knippenberg, 2015). However, post-secularisation theses have argued that this has not occurred to the extent once thought, and the role of religion in society is still both publicly and individually significant (Habermas, 2006; Romanillos et al., 2012). In the sociologist Grace Davie's (2015, 5) articulation, people in the UK may be "believing without belonging"; people may have religious belief/faith personally but not attend religious worship or consider themselves part of a religious institution. For Davie (2015, 5), "vicarious religion" can follow from this; institutional religion and worship is performed by fewer people on behalf of the idea of religion for the majority.

Drawing this conversation together, the implications from this discussion are that religion in this research is understood predominantly in an institutional sense and relating to God, but I

also recognise that individuals and groups have different understandings of their religion (including the growth of non-denominational churches). Religion can therefore have meaning in a collective sense as well as for an individual. How does this compare to an understanding of faith?

### 3.2. Faith

How is faith distinct from religion? Is there a politics in this difference? Faith is the relationship between an individual and God (Brace et al., 2011). Saint Augustine is a compelling theologian and thinker to consider here for a Christian understanding of faith because his work from the fourth and fifth centuries has been integral in the development of Christian theology and practice since, for example influencing Aquinas and Calvin (Marrou, 1957). Augustine writes on faith in several of his key texts, most notably with a personal account in *Usefulness of Belief* (1953c) in which he emphasises that faith is a personal journey and search for truth. Truth for Augustine is understood through knowledge (Augustine, 1953b), and knowledge is understood as relating to God (Augustine, 1953c). Overall for Augustine, faith is about personal commitment (Burnaby, 2006). Therefore, to build upon Chapter One, where the faith that this research focusses upon is distinct from faith ‘in anything/something’ is that it relates to God. This makes it distinct in both meaning and practice for faithful subjects because God is believed in Christianity to be omnigood, omniscient, and omnipotent (Augustine, 1964). Faith is hence about both the individual and God; through the relationship between them, both are significant parts of the equation rather than the emphasis being solely on God. This understanding of faith thereby makes it ontologically distinct from other types of faith because of it relating to belief in a transcendent being; God.

A person’s faith can change temporally and spatially (Brace et al., 2011; Holloway, 2011b) as it develops through personal experience (McGuire, 2008). Faith being personal makes it different for each person. In this way, faith can also be challenged both by the individual’s experiences, and by others with whom they interact. For both the Christian novelist and theologian C.S. Lewis (2012) and for Miles (2014), a key component of a person’s faith is it being maintained whilst also being challenged. Building upon this, for the political theorist Connolly (2002b, 93) a person’s faith being challenged is also a bodily sensation:

When your faith is disturbed your being is rattled. You react bodily through the roiling of your gut, the hunching of your shoulders, the pursing of your lips, and the tightening of your skin.

Connolly refers here to faith ‘in something’ rather than necessarily religious faith. How this is useful for this research is to recognise faith in anything as something that can be

experienced through the body, and therefore faith is not a static phenomenon. In terms of affect theory, faith then becomes an affect which impacts upon the body, and in turn the body is affected by faith, and a person's faith can change with this. This shows that having faith in something does not mean that faith cannot be challenged. Returning to the research focus of faith in a religious sense, one way that faith can be understood in terms of bodily sensation is through ritual, for example movement in a church service with a person raising their hand as an act of worship (Holloway, 2013), or undertaking a pilgrimage and putting the body through physical endurance as an act of faith (Maddrell and Scriven, 2016). What these examples do is lead into consideration of faith in terms of movement, and subsequently in terms of action.

Conceiving faith as action is often in contrast to a negative perception of restrictive institutionalised religion. In *Take this bread* Miles (2012b, xvi) writes on her understanding of faith after her conversion from atheism to Christianity:

Faith, for me, isn't an argument, a catechism, a philosophical "proof". It is instead a lens, a way of experiencing life, and a willingness to act.

Miles contrasts faith as action to argument, catechism and philosophy, all of which can be associated with institutional religion. Understanding faith in this way is a key contribution to subsequently apprehend for this research that people are motivated by their faith to take part in faith-based social action. There can be a perception that faith instigates practical action more than religion, meaning religion has negative connotations in favour of faith (Davie, 2015). This reflects an understanding of faith as an affect which affects bodies' capacity to act. It is in this distinction that a perceived difference between religion and faith can take on a political meaning if faith – and by implication non-denominational groups which are not part of an institutional religion – are seen as superior to traditional, established religious institutions. This can be understood in terms of a move from religious dogma to faith as praxis, a shift found across and amongst denominations (Cloke et al., 2012). Cloke et al. (2012) explore the complexity of this shift within Christianity, which can be interpreted in terms of the political distinction between religion and faith. Particularly, they chart the problematised relationship between liberal and evangelical positions, the former once prioritising social action, and the latter prioritising evangelism but moving towards more inclusion of social action. I add a third dimension to these relations, that of Anglo-Catholicism. Anglo-Catholicism emphasises tradition over evangelism and is often not associated with social action. However, this is not to say an Anglo-Catholic cannot have a practical faith with faith-based social action. As Cloke et al. (2012) argue, one person could combine different elements of these theological traditions in their faith. The politics between faith and religion is therefore transient and highly subjective.



However, faith is related to religion. Augustine (1953a) makes a distinction between faith and Faith; the former as personal and the latter referring to that which is made known in the creed. Also known as a statement of belief, the creed explicates a series of beliefs in the Catholic Church<sup>2</sup> (Augustine, 1953a). Similarly, Lewis (2012) understands faith as being about belief in Christian doctrine. Building upon this, Augustine (1953c, 312; 1958) makes a link between belief and knowledge:

Our knowledge, therefore, we owe to reason; our beliefs to authority; and our opinions to error. Knowledge always implies belief, and so does opinion. But belief does not always imply knowledge and opinion never does.

This introduces more clearly the notion of belief into this discussion. For Augustine, belief comes through authority, which for Augustine would have been the Catholic Church and ultimately God. Knowledge, then, he links to reason and that which necessitates belief, and yet belief does not necessarily involve knowledge. Augustine also later writes in *The Trinity Book IX* that faith can lead to knowledge (Augustine, 2006a). Initially Miles' understanding of faith can be placed beyond institutional knowledge in contrast to Augustine. However, both Miles and Augustine to some degree emphasise a certainty in action that can come from faith, either through commitment to action (Miles) or knowledge (Augustine). The Archbishop of York Sentamu (2015a, 245) builds upon this understanding of faith as action: "Faith is not a crutch to lean on. It is the very act of leaning". Sentamu is perhaps referring to critiques of Christian faith which argue that it is used to give people comfort, but arguably Christian faith is most active when it is uncomfortable and demands action: for example, Biblical teaching calls for people to help those in need and reach out to the ostracized in a community. Faith in this instance is both materialised in the action, and the affect that motives that action. Faith is therefore more than just an action because it is also about the relationship between a person and God. It is this that makes faith distinct from other motivations to act.

This leads us to a final consideration for faith; just as with religion, in the context of secularisation the relevance of faith in society could be questioned. As Connolly (1999; 2002b) explores, this can be understood in relation to pluralism. Briefly, pluralism for Connolly is an engaging way of viewing society through cultural diversity as an alternative to secularisation. Significantly, pluralism is distinct from cultural relativism: pluralism as supporting diversity, and cultural relativism as supporting the culture which is dominant in a specific place (Connolly, 2002b). In this pluralist spirit, when faith is understood as action it

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<sup>2</sup> Other (similar) versions of the creed are found within the different Christian denominations

gives an understanding of faith which goes beyond measures such as statistical attendance in faith congregations (Miles, 2014). Accordingly, faith is not simply a private concern because it has impacts upon wider society in the action resulting from faith (Latour, 2001).

Overall, through this explication of the notions of religion and faith, I understand religion in its institutional sense and predominantly through the major world religions. Religion is therefore more of a collective notion than faith, but significantly could not exist without individual and collective belief in God. Faith, at times in contrast to religion, I understand as being about personal development and commitment, and the relationship between an individual and their belief in God. Faith can therefore operate within institutionalised religion but this is not a condition of faith. In this research, I focus upon faith and faithful subjects (where the geography of religion more broadly refers to religious subjects) in order to explore the role of personal faith (and thereby also the role and power of God) in motivating for action. More precisely I explore the emergent role of faith from people's volunteering narratives as I ran a UK Christian faith-based MakeLunch project responding to children's holiday hunger. Faith as action, as opposed to institutional religion, therefore places emphasis upon individual bodies acting and coming together, both to affect and to be affected. However, this is not to say that religion does not have a role to play in faith-based social action. Many projects are run by institutional religious groups such as churches (denominational and non-denominational). In this way, social action is both a religious project, and a faith-motivated response. It is through the action itself in giving food (or similar) that affective bodies become evident, with faith and religion – and God – all as affects upon the body, which changes over time in its affective capacity, and how it is affected for future action. In this way, faith and religion are affectively performed in space, again showing the role of religion and faith in society, and beyond spaces traditionally considered sacred.

In the remainder of this chapter I bring these ideas together in exploring what is meant by a faith-based organisation. Following the focus of this research on a UK Christian charity responding to holiday hunger, I focus on the UK and Christianity. As for Cloke (2015), this focus comes with caveats – this is not to say other religions and faiths in the UK are not important, nor to present this as a universal situation. Rather, it is to focus on one particular instance of faith-based social action, and to explore how affective bodies are at play there.

#### 4. Responding to Need: Faith-based Organisations in the UK

Faith-based organisations are responding to UK food poverty, but to be able to fully understand this, I first take a step back. First, I look at the context in which UK faith-based organisations operate and analyse the statistics for religious affiliation in the UK today. The statistics appear to show a declining role of religion in the UK, yet building upon post-secularisation, this does not show the full story. Rather, particularly in the context of responding to food poverty, faith-based organisations are increasingly playing a role in UK society. From this basis I can then answer the broader question: what is a faith-based organisation? Using a typology by Sider and Unruh (2004) I develop a picture of faith-based organisations around their characteristics, projects, and overall types that shows the diversity and contributions they make to post-secularity in the UK. In this way the research focus of a Christian faith-based charity responding to holiday hunger makes a direct contribution to the geography of religion in how to understand religion and faith in society, and as performed in people's daily lives.

##### 4.1. *Religion in the UK*

In what context are UK faith-based organisations operating? I have already established this is one of a retracing welfare state, but what is the condition more broadly of religious affiliation in the UK? There has been considerable change in the position of religion in the UK over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Woodhead, 2012; Davie, 2015). The UK has increasingly become multicultural, although Christianity – specifically the Church of England – remains the official religion of the state in England (Dinham and Lowndes, 2009). With increasing multiculturalism (and indeed pluralism) it is no longer accurate to refer to religion in the UK solely as Christianity, and the significant presence of people practising other world religions must be recognised. Interest in this spans across disciplines including human geography but extends beyond this, for example to politics and sociology. Davie (2015) reviews the state of religion in the UK in the second edition of *Religion in Britain: A Persistent Paradox* (the first edition having been published in 1994). In this she argues that whilst statistically Christian church attendance has continued to decline, there is continuing debate and arguable growth in the role and presence of churches in UK society. It is this simultaneous decline and growth which Davie calls a paradox. Mirroring a key concern in the geography of religion in the role of religion in society, this paradox recognises the growth of churches' presence in society through outreach/action beyond worship in sacred spaces. Statistical decline in religious affiliation is clear in census data for England and Wales, as shown in figure one below:

**Figure One: Changes in England and Wales Census Responses on Religious Affiliation (Data Source: ONS, 2013)**

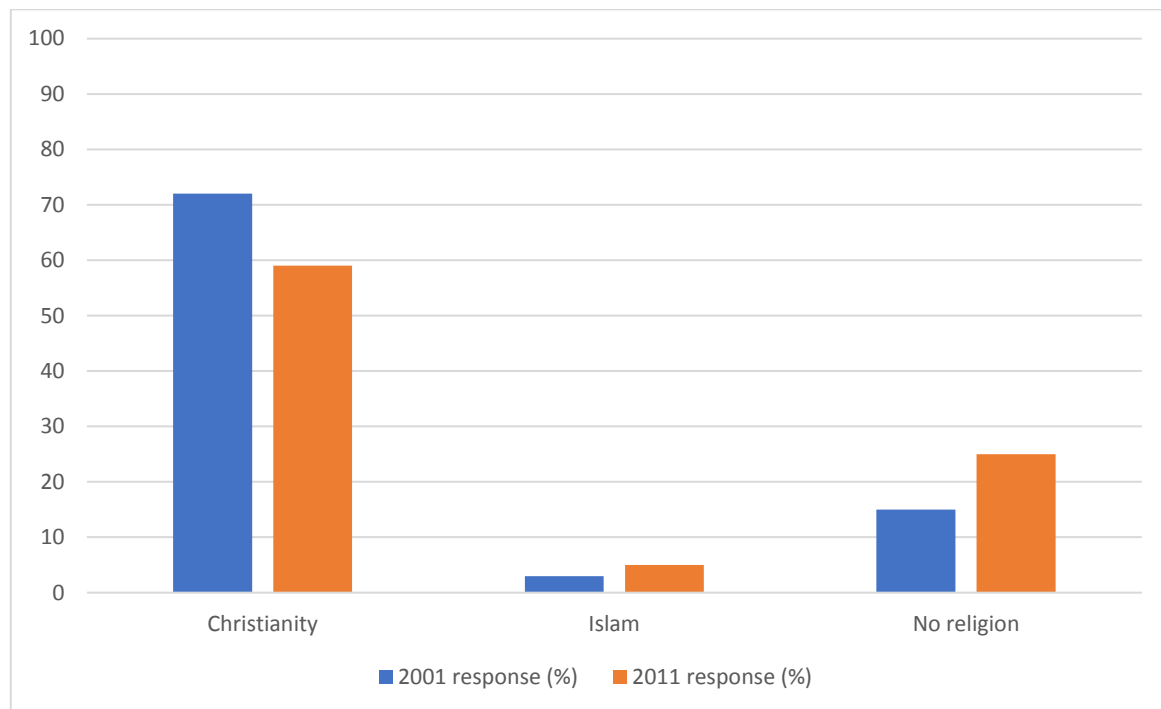


Figure one shows data for the three largest responses for affiliation in the 2001 and 2011 censuses: Christianity, Islam, and no religion. Whilst this comparison is temporally limited because a census question on religious affiliation was only included for the first time in 2001 (Brimicombe, 2007), this gives some indication of the UK population's changing religious affiliation. However, Catto (2014) shows that how a question is asked can make a difference to people's perception of their religious affiliation. Ergo, if the census question had been worded differently, the results may also have been different. In the 2011 England and Wales census context, Christianity and Islam are listed as the two religions with the largest numbers of respondents. Other religious affiliations are also found in the UK, for example Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism which together make less than 4% of the general population's affiliation (ONS, 2012; 2013).

When the condition of institutional religion in the UK is analysed in terms of statistical religious affiliation, emphasising the decline side of Davie's paradox, the relevance of religion to society can begin to be questioned and secularisation advocated (for example as acknowledged by Latour, 2001). However, as the debates of post-secularisation explored in Chapter Two show, there are ways in which there is religious growth in the UK, and that religion is playing a (continued) role in society. For example, the point made by Ley and Tse (2013) that there is religious growth from immigration from the global South to North is

applicable to the UK, particularly in the context of black Pentecostal churches and other forms of non-denominational churches. Furthermore, I have established that faith-based organisations are crucial players in responding to UK poverty, both in terms of welfare provision and activism to challenge the government. It is questionable whether religious groups, and Christianity in particular, have experienced a return to public life as this would imply a previous decline (Dinham and Lowndes, 2009). Indeed, faith-based social action is certainly not a new phenomenon (Clope et al., 2005), for example Christian altruism was key in the Victorian era for both provision and social reform with notable figures such as Octavia Hill campaigning for adequate housing and access to open space for the poorest in society (Maurice, 2010). No matter whether faith groups' action is understood as a renewal or continuation of previous action, what is significant here is that in recent years despite statistics on declining religious affiliation, there has been an increase in the presence and activity of faith-based organisations in British public life. It is this which is the focus of this research, more specifically with a Christian charity responding to children's holiday hunger. The final piece missing in understanding this focus is a question I turn to next: what are faith-based organisations?

#### 4.2. *What are Faith-based Organisations?*

Faith-based organisations can take a variety of forms, meaning there is not one individual definition (Beaumont and Baker, 2011). To frame this within understanding the role of religion in society, it is significant to recognise that a faith-based organisation is distinct (legally) from a religious organisation or group, although there can be overlaps in practice (Beaumont, 2008). Therefore, building upon the discussion of religion and faith, with 'faith' in the name, faith-based organisations can be understood as emphasising the action associated with faith rather than specific institutional beliefs. However, as they often take place in buildings belonging to religious groups, such as Christian churches, Muslim mosques or Sikh gurdwaras, faith-based organisations can provide an overlap between institutional religion and personal faith.

A starting point for understanding faith-based organisations is a typology presented by the theologians Sider and Unruh (2004). Their typology has three parts which I take in turn: the characteristics of the organisation, the project being run, and from this, different types of organisation. I start with the *characteristics of faith-based organisations* (Sider and Unruh, 2004, 121-123):

- a) *“Mission statement”*: the degree to which religious language is used in the mission statement
- b) *“Founding”*: an organisation may have a religious heritage which may not may not still be explicit and relevant in the present running of the organisation
- c) *“Affiliation”*: whether any affiliations an organisation may have are religious groups
- d) *“Controlling board”*: the degree to which there is a religious identity for board members
- e) *“Senior management”*: the degree to which there is a religious identity for senior management staff
- f) *“Other staff”*: the degree to which there is a religious identity for other staff members
- g) *“Support”*: where financial and non-financial support may be sourced; potentially from faith groups
- h) *“Personal religious practices”*: whether religious practices for a part of the organisation’s running, for example prayer at the start of meetings

These characteristics are helpful for an overview of faith-based organisations as a whole. The wide range of characteristics from the mission statement and founding, through to staff and how the organisation is supported/resourced show the variety of ways in which an organisation can be faith orientated. However, what is not so well recognised by this typology is that an organisation can also vary spatially, for example by being based in multiple locations, and vary temporally because organisations change over time.

One key characteristic for any organisation – faith-based or otherwise – is the acquisition of resources (called “support” in the above typology). Sustainable resources are needed for any organisation to continue over time. With regards to voluntary groups’ relationship with the welfare state, voluntary groups have increasingly found it difficult to fund their activities (Lambie-Mumford and Jarvis, 2012; A. Williams, 2012). This can be accentuated as faith-based organisations are increasingly becoming politically contested as they are involved in activism as well as provision. However, the link of faith-based voluntary groups to institutional religion can mean they are resource rich particularly in terms of people to volunteer, having a network both nationally and locally, and having physical locations to run projects (Chapman, 2009). For example, food and responding to poverty are key themes in the Bible (Kneen, 1995), which therefore aids the mobilisation of groups of Christians to volunteer in food poverty response programmes.

Building upon these characteristics, recent growth in the number of UK faith-based organisations has partly been through a social franchise model. I consider this briefly because the faith-based social action project that I established in this research is through the social franchise MakeLunch. As reported by the European Social Franchising Network, social franchises across Europe have developed as a phenomenon in the last decade (Bartilsson, 2012). Social franchises operate in a similar way to a commercial franchise, but with a focus on replicating projects that respond to need rather than being motivated by profit (Bartilsson, 2012). A notable means by which this has occurred through faith groups in the UK is through the Cinnamon Network. The Cinnamon Network was developed from 2010 to help churches across the UK replicate social action projects and foster faith-secular partnerships, as well as providing training and resources for churches (Cinnamon Network, 2016). Two of the largest social franchises included in the Cinnamon Network are Trussell Trust foodbanks and Street Pastors. Trussell Trust foodbanks provide emergency food provision for service-users to take to their homes (Trussell Trust, 2016e), and Street Pastors work on urban streets to care for and help protect people's nightlife (Street Pastors, 2016). Both the Trussell Trust and Street Pastors have national and international networks. Whilst secular groups can also use the social franchise model, the strong resource and support networks within institutional religions in the UK augments this as an opportunity for faith groups thereby providing greater opportunities for action.

However, an organisation is made up of individuals, and therefore whilst a faith-based organisation may present its beliefs as a collective in its mission statement, individuals involved in that organisation may differ in their own individual beliefs or faith, and how these are then affectively performed (Cloke et al., 2005). This is an aspect of faith-based organisations that is not engaged with in Sider and Unruh's typology, and yet is important for understanding how faith-based organisations function because they can be shaped by the performances of their employees and volunteers. Furthermore, aside from individual differentiation, groups/denominations can be diverse within one religion (NCVO, 2007). Group diversity from individuals is not necessarily something an organisation would endeavour to govern. This is partly because many faith-based organisations rely upon volunteers to be able to run their projects, and volunteers may commit transiently or seasonally around a core group of volunteers. This combination can make the overall group more difficult to regulate, and emphasises the importance of the individual subject acting. I have already considered how A. Williams et al. (2016, 1) give an analysis of this "contested space" in the setting of food banks, thereby examining the varied experiences of volunteers including their political responses to seeing need. Therefore, whilst many faith-based organisations are only legally allowed to be political/campaign in relation to their charitable

purpose (Charity Commission, 2008), when responding to need such as food poverty these groups can become significant politically active voices. This is a further way in which religion and politics have arguably interacted at greater levels in recent years.

Secondly in their typology Sider and Unruh (2004, 123-124) summarise the *characteristics of faith-based projects*:

- a) *“Religious environment”*: considers the location of the project (for example in a faith building or not), and the visual surroundings in that location
- b) *“Programme content”*: to what degree is there an explicit faith content in the project
- c) *“Integration of religious components”*: how do project users encounter faith in the project, if at all
- d) *“Expected connection between religious content and desired outcome”*: the degree to which there is expected by the organisation for project users to have a religious encounter and/or change during the project

These characteristics would be difficult to measure and evaluate in a faith-based organisation because they are highly changeable. The degree to which faith is explicit in a faith-based organisation relates to Jacques Derrida's (2000) discussion of hospitality: how are people, often called clients (for example by the Trussell Trust (2016e)) and elsewhere called guests, recipients or service-users, welcomed and able to access faith-based projects? Derrida problematises how society thinks about, and engages with, hospitality; he challenges us on actions that are presented as being acts of unconditional hospitality. The implication of this is that we need to challenge ourselves in believing that we act or give unconditionally, and as a result question what conditions may actually be attached. Sara Ahmed (2014, 53) builds upon this idea in relation to will:

When participation depends on an invitation, then participation becomes a condition or comes with conditions. ... Guests would be welcome on condition they are willing to make their will conditional on the will of those who precede them.

In relation to faith-based organisations' projects the question becomes about the degree to which faith is explicit or a requirement for people's participation in the project. This can be applicable for both volunteers and service-users. For service-users this relates to how they are able to use or access projects; who 'deserves' to use the project? A. Williams et al. (2016, 19) argue that Trussell Trust foodbanks use a form of "moral outsourcing" as approved distributors decide who can access the foodbank, rather than the foodbank volunteers themselves. Indeed, the very idea of a person 'using' a project is problematic because it places a clear boundary between giver and receiver. This research looks to



challenge this boundary by emphasising the affection (impact) upon volunteers from the volunteering experience. Together this provides a further dimension of the operation of faith-based organisations which will vary spatially and temporally across different groups and organisations.

Sider and Unruh (2004, 119-120) complete their typology by combining the characteristics of organisations and projects to give *six different types of organisation*:

1. *“Faith-permeated organisations”*: faith is explicit and influences all areas of the organisation
2. *“Faith-centred organisations”*: faith is explicit but can be opt-out for project participants and volunteers
3. *“Faith-affiliated organisations”*: there is a faith influence, for example in the mission statement, but this is not a necessary condition for staff and the organisation may appear to others to be secular
4. *“Faith-background organisations”*: faith is not explicit and may only be historical
5. *“Faith-secular partnerships”*: faith and secular organisations have come together for a singular organisation
6. *“Secular organisations”*: there is no religious reference or content

Sider and Unruh (2004) acknowledge that the typology could be difficult to implement in practice because there are questions as to how different categories should be measured. This is a significant limitation of the typology, as well as the fact that it does not account for spatial or temporal change and variation in an organisation. However, what the typology does highlight is the wide variety of factors involved in faith-based organisations, and the diversity of organisations incorporated under this umbrella term. This is significant in taking forward an analysis of faith-based organisations to recognise that their action is spatially and temporally specific.

Consideration of faith-based organisations builds upon the key themes in the geography of religion identified in Chapter Two. However, the action of faith-based organisations should not be romanticised. Rather, it should be recognised that faith-based organisations also face challenges – such as being sustainable and having sufficient resources. Furthermore, beyond a romantic idea of responding to need, there can be multiple dimensions to the motivation of faith-based organisations. For example, for some faith-based organisations there is a desire to convert people to Christianity as well as help in a time of need (Cloke et al., 2005). This can be unpopular amongst others (coming from a faith basis or not), particularly if this second motivation is not explicit or becomes a condition for receiving

provision. This is not to say faith-based social action reinstates a binary between faith and the secular: it can also provide an opportunity for people of different and no faith to work together towards a common aim of responding to need or activism (Cloke and Beaumont, 2012; Cloke, 2015). Faith-based organisations are therefore a way in which to understand post-secularity as being performed both by individuals and collectively as organisations. The wide variety of ways in which this can occur is testament to the diversity and potential that post-secularity holds for society.

## **5. Conclusions**

In conclusion, faith-based organisations responding to UK food poverty are a strong empirical basis for this research because they allow the research to simultaneously make contributions to academia, policy making, and public understanding. Food poverty is a complex issue that moves beyond not having enough food to be understood as involving the affordability, accessibility and nutritional value of food. Holiday hunger – the empirical focus on this research – is a key concern and avenue for research in relation to food poverty because it highlights an aspect that can be chronic poverty, as well as inequality and vulnerability for children. Furthermore, limited research has been undertaken on holiday hunger to-date. Greater understanding of this issue is therefore essential for both policy makers and others to respond to holiday hunger, for example faith-based organisations. Indeed, I have argued that food poverty is a politically contested issue because levels of UK food poverty have increased since welfare reforms and the retraction of the welfare state. Faith-based organisations have been key in responding to food poverty, but contrary to a rights-based approach, I do not understand their response as a vehicle of the state because they have also been involved in activism and challenged the government.

Both religion and faith are significant in how groups and individuals respond to UK food poverty, particularly in the context of the retracting welfare state. I have therefore considered how to understand both religion and faith, and whether there is a politics in this difference. I have built up an understanding of religion that focuses upon institutional religion through the major world religions, but is also more than an institution through a collective belief in God. Faith, then, I understand in this research as more personal and relating to the relationship between an individual and God. Faith often instigates more emphasis on action, although this can be in the context of institutional religion; it is here that if one is seen as superior to the other then that difference can be political.

The final section of this chapter turned to how to understand faith-based organisations. As this research focuses upon one Christian-based organisation responding to holiday hunger I focussed in this discussion upon the UK and Christianity. First, faith-based organisations are operating in conditions in the UK where religious attendance is statistically declining. This means that the increasing presence of faith-based organisations in UK society for both welfare provision and activism can simultaneously challenge and build the relationship between religion and state. Researching faith-based organisations thereby contributes to the geography of religion's debates of religion and faith beyond worship spaces, and post-secularity. In this way research into faith-based organisations contributes to understanding the place of religion and faith in society, a key theme of the geography of religion that I identified in Chapter Two.

What, then, is a faith-based organisation? I answered this question by making use of Sider and Unruh's typology of faith-based organisations based around their characteristics, projects, and overall grouping. Key to a faith-based organisation is that faith plays a part in its characteristics, projects, and overall grouping. However, there is not one distinct definition of a faith-based organisation because the degree to which faith is explicit and influential can vary across and within organisations. This can present both opportunities and challenges for faith-based organisations, for example in providing resources through their links to institutional religion (whilst legally being distinct), and how service-users/recipients access the project. To link this to Chapter Two's consideration of affective atmospheres, faith-based organisations can have a diversity of affective atmospheres and ergo there is not one uniform atmosphere that makes an organisation faith-based. However, amongst this diversity of make-up and atmosphere, what faith-based organisations have in common is that faith plays a part in how they function. Building upon Chapters One and Two, it is the ontological status of faith that makes a faith-based organisation distinct from another organisation, even if their projects are similar. This is because just as understanding faith as relating to a transcendent God makes individual action motivated by faith distinct, so this is true in the collective context of a whole organisation. How this makes the action distinct will vary from one organisation to another, but examples include endeavouring to respond to need unconditionally, emphasising aspiring for justice, or wanting to convert people to Christianity. It is true that an organisation that is not faith-based could also aim for the former two ideas, but what is different at a faith-based organisation is how the reasoning for this aspiration is related to God, because for faithful subjects this makes a faith-motivated idea or action distinct from a worldly thought or action. This said, as with individual action, faith at a faith-based organisation is not the only component in its functioning, and so faith is relative – but distinct – to other aspects. In terms of this diversity between faith-based

organisations it is crucial to understand that individual volunteers and employees make up faith-based organisations. Individuals are crucial contributors to affective atmospheres, and for this reason focussing upon the motivations and experiences of a group of individuals – rather than the overall affective atmosphere – is an insightful window into how they act. Therefore, whilst an organisation as a whole may present specific characteristics, these are not necessarily shared by individuals in how they work or volunteer at a faith-based organisation. This reiterates the importance in this research that faith as a motivation and part of experience was emergent from Lunch volunteers' narratives, not something that was presumed to be important.

What the combination of faith as action and attention to faith-based organisations does for this research is to present a specific way in which a person can act out their faith in their daily lives; the latter being the other key concern identified Chapter Two in the geography of religion. This research approaches that action through affect theory. As I established in Chapter Two, affect theory allows us to research faith in a way that goes further than other approaches to recognise the ontological status of faith for faithful subjects. Therefore affect theory is a way in research to understand the significance of faith as a motivation for action that can result in experience holding more meaning for the subject than what is represented in that action. Understanding faith-based organisations in terms of affect theory and the individuals acting within them therefore gives a different level of understanding of that action – at a performative and a “more-than” what is represented in that action level – compared to an organisational approach to volunteering. What affect theory adds to faith as a motivation to act is that volunteers not only affect others, but are also affected by volunteering themselves; a body is always changed – affected – by an experience. To reiterate, approaching faith-based organisations through affect theory allows us to understand volunteers' actions in terms of continually reproduced faithful subjects rather than simply an institutional mechanism or faith as a part of identity (Sutherland, 2017). In this research, then, faith as action, and how faithful volunteers each affect and are affected is explored in the specific context of volunteers responding to holiday hunger at a faith-based project that I established and ran. These experiences will be captured in volunteers' interview and diary narratives. How this research understands their motivations, and consequently volunteering as performances of faith, are emergent from their narratives. However, before this action can be examined through affect theory, there is a question which first needs addressing: how through affect do these bodies come to act? It is this which I turn to next.



## **Chapter Four: How, through Affect Theory, does the Body Come to Act?**

### **1. Introduction**

Most simply put, an affect is about a body's power to act (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3). A person's faith can therefore be considered as an affect because faith – understood in this research as a person's personal relationship with God (Augustine, 1953a; Lewis, 2012; Miles, 2012b; Sentamu, 2015b) – impacts upon their capacity to act, and how they are affected for future action. To put this another way, through a person's faith (and therefore their belief in God) they can be motivated to act, for example through volunteering. The ontological status of faith makes a faith motivation distinct from other motivations because faith links a person and the resulting action to (their belief in) a transcendent God. A person without religious faith may also undertake the same action, but the action would not be with the same meaning as for faithful subjects. Affect theory is therefore an ideal conception through which to approach faith-based research because when faith is considered as an affect it can be recognised as being “more-than” a purely explicit and represented phenomenon (Lorimer, 2005, 84). To reiterate, a person's faith is not necessarily represented explicitly to others in the volunteering undertaken, but by being a motivating factor, faith is present in action for faithful subjects. There is therefore more happening in volunteering than just the provision of food, or responding to a homeless person. Affect theory is a means to approach this “more-than” by considering the interactions between bodies, because human bodies both affect other bodies and in turn are affected (affection). In this research any significance placed upon faith as a motivation and in volunteering is emergent from Lunch volunteers' narratives: this is important to reiterate in order to show that faith is not assumed to be significant or a priority in the Lunch volunteers' experiences. Faith is therefore identified by the volunteers themselves in their narratives as significant and distinct, and also as relational to other motivations and parts of experience. In the UK context of declining religious affiliation, to act through faith – whether explicitly or not – is not necessarily a comfortable position for faithful subjects because this can mark a person as different (Davie, 2015). This is significant to highlight in order that faith-based social action is not romanticised around ideas of giving, and rather to recognise that faith can be a challenge to push a person to act beyond their comfort-zone.

Whilst I have established that this research looks to contribute to the growing use of affect theory to analyse faith-based social action, a pre-requisite question has not been given due attention both for affect theory with faith-based research and in affective geographies more

broadly. This question is how, through affect theory, does the human body come to act? And then, what is the body's role in that action? The question of how the body comes to act has not been well addressed in affect theory to-date, particularly to make use of affect theory to change how we think through empirical situations in the world. Too often the acting body is taken as the starting point in analysis, whereas if we are to truly understand – and question – the acting body, then we need to question how it is, through affect theory, that the body comes to act. In the context of an affect theory approach to faith-based research, the question of how the body comes to act is particularly complex because the starting point to respond to this question present a binary: in affect theory it is commonly understood that there is no will in human action, whilst in the Christian faith, will is paramount. How, then, can the body be understood as acting, through affect theory, in a faith context if these two oppositions are presented? If affect theory is to be taken forward as an approach to the geography of religion then these questions must be addressed; research cannot simply apply affect theory to faith-based action that is taking place. Rather, we must first understand how, through affect theory, that action can have taken place. This discussion therefore contributes both towards the geography of religion, and to how to understand the mechanism of affect in affective geographies. Within each there is a need to start with how the body comes to act, rather than start with the already acting body, because the latter misses out a crucial part of action and renders any analysis of human action incomplete. This chapter responds to the question how the body comes to act through a discussion of human will.

The chapter is structured as follows. First I justify why I am discussing will in relation to Spinoza and Augustine. I shall then take Spinoza and Augustine in turn to consider how human action takes place in relation to will, causality, freedom, and their understanding of humans and God. I conclude by emphasising the importance of recognising influences upon the body's action; of which faith is one. I will argue that humans are not as limited in Spinozian thinking or free in Augustinian thinking as it first appears. Crucially, from engaging closely with Spinoza's work I will argue that for Spinoza whilst will is an illusion, once humans realise the limits and influences (affects) under which they act (faith, moral obligation and guilt being influences for Augustine), then they can increase their freedom and engage with active affections. Through this I emphasise the importance of affection as well as affect in how the body acts for both the development of the geography of religion and affect theory.

## **2. Why Spinoza and Augustine?**

Contrary to approaches which have given a form of genealogy of the will (for example Arendt, 1978; Ahmed, 2014) I focus on two thinkers: Spinoza and Augustine. Through them I consider will in a social context, rather than in a psychological context (Ahmed, 2014, makes this distinction). For both thinkers I emphasise the importance of the historical sensitivity of their texts, but then extend these to the contemporary context where I pose this question between affect and will (Arsic, 2003). Spinoza wrote largely in isolation in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Netherlands where he engaged with radical politics and was excommunicated from his Jewish faith (Deleuze, 1988). In turn, Augustine has been argued as seeking moral order in a time of social disorder as the Roman Empire fell in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Marrou, 1957; P. Slater, 2011). I have chosen Spinoza for this discussion because he is the key thinker on affect theory from which Deleuzian interpretations have stemmed in affective geographies. The focus on Spinoza rather than Deleuze makes the point that these two thinkers are not synonymous (Ruddick, 2010) meaning Spinoza cannot only be read through Deleuze if Spinoza's original meaning is to be found. Focussing upon Spinoza, then, gives me the opportunity to take up ideas which were not focussed upon by Deleuze, yet also build upon Deleuze by considering his interpretations.

The choice of Augustine is more complex, and indeed a different Christian philosopher could have been chosen. Augustine was an African philosopher and theologian living under a repressive Roman Empire which fell during his lifetime. He converted via several sects from the African Church to Roman Catholicism and later, albeit reluctantly, became Bishop of Hippo (Marrou, 1957). Augustine is chosen for three main reasons. First, as earlier established in reference to understanding faith, Augustine is a key Christian thinker who has been influential through to Christian thought today. In particular, he is also a key Christian thinker on will and can be considered as "the first Christian philosopher." (Arendt, 1978, 84). Hence, whilst I do not look for a thinker to represent the whole of Christianity and all of its diversities, Augustine is a more than adequate starting point. Secondly, Augustine has been an influential philosopher on will beyond Christianity and is "often credited as the starting point in the history of the will, that is, as the scholar who first gives the will the status of independent power." (Ahmed, 2014, 4). In a discussion of will it is therefore fitting to bring to the conversation this influential thinker. Thirdly, Augustine's understanding and justification for the existence of will in relation to human suffering makes him well placed to explore faith-based social action. As I will ascertain, Augustine perceives the existence of will as necessary when there is also human suffering in the world, because otherwise the goodness of God is negated. In turn, this necessarily can be extended to humans being



able to respond to suffering for the qualities of the Christian God to be maintained. Accordingly Augustine is an ideal philosopher through which to think about how, through affect theory, the human body can be motivated by faith to act.

The combination of Spinoza and Augustine is also poignant. Across social science texts, Spinoza is pitched as representing the argument for a lack of human will, and Augustine the argument for will (for example Arendt, 1978; Connolly, 1999; Ahmed, 2014). It is problematic when this association is assumed rather than questioned, because it means that affect theory is then applied to analysis in the geography of religion without due consideration as to how it is in a Spinozian understanding of affect that the body acts. I both challenge and respond to this assumption by exploring affect and will through Spinoza and Augustine simultaneously in order to approach faith through affect theory in a way that takes seriously how through affect theory the body can be understood as acting. This is therefore a way to act on the potential for affect theory to raise the ontological status of faith in research. In doing so I follow a call by Ley and Tse (2013, 162) for how to approach faith-based action:

What is required is a degree of humility in approaching the spiritual with the recognition that spiritual experience cannot be adequately reduced to social facts and that theological accounts need to be part of the interpretive frame.

The combination of Spinoza and Augustine is therefore significant for research in both the geography of religion, and affective geographies more broadly as I question how, through affect theory, the body acts.

The discussions in this chapter frame the analysis to come, and in particular how to think affect and faith through each other. Thinking affect and faith through each other challenges them both: it challenges faith on the other affective forces that shape human action and being, but also challenges affect theory's assumptions about human will. To put this another way, this research stages and makes use of a tension between affective experience which affects the individual but is also beyond the individual, with the more traditional sense of ourselves as the determinant of our actions. This fosters an analysis that gives expression to parts of faith that are "more-than" what is represented in action, but to also challenge faith's assumptions on human will. Ultimately, then, in both the geographies of affect and religion, this tension questions how it is that the body comes to act and persist in acting.

### 3. The Acting Body through Spinoza

#### 3.1. *The Will, Imagination and Illusion*

In *Ethics* Spinoza interprets the acting body in relation to freedom, will, and imagination:

In the mind there is no absolute, or free, will, but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another, and this again by another, and so to infinity. (1996, IIP48, 62)

But imagining a thing as free can be nothing but simply imagining it while we are ignorant of the causes by which it has been determined to act.

(1996, VP45D, 164-165)

When the will is understood in relation to freedom of the body to act, then we find that freedom for Spinoza is imagination which comes from ignorance. Imagination for Spinoza could therefore be interpreted as a form of thinking, but through ignorance it is a flawed thought. Influenced by the Ancient Greeks, Spinoza associates freedom with knowledge (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999). Imagination for Spinoza is the lowest of three types of knowledge: the others being reason (middle weighting) and intuition (the highest form of knowledge) (IIP40S). I will subsequently return to this distinction in reference to a body gaining power, but presently focus on imagination. Imagination for Spinoza is a form of knowledge that comes from bodily awareness; awareness of one's own body, and of other bodies (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999). However, as the lowest form of knowledge, imagination is a recollection of ideas and not preferable for humans (IIP40S). In relation to freedom, Spinoza understands imagination as an illusion. Sharp (2007) explicates this further, understanding illusion for Spinoza as being formed of three strands: first, illusion of thought in itself (from the human); secondly, the illusion that ideas are fully formed from the start; and thirdly, the illusion that minds are autonomous and discrete (when actually humans cannot operate in isolation from each other). Linking imagination to illusion, if and when imagination is falsely understood by humans as being a higher form of knowledge – misunderstanding imagination as reason or intuition – then this is an illusion (IIP48). Will and freedom for Spinoza can be one such imagined illusion when they are understood outside their appropriate contexts, notably in relation to the body's affections. In the remainder of this chapter it will become clear that this has implications for how the body acts, affects, and is affected.

The will for Spinoza ultimately is a "mode of thinking" (IP32D, 21). I have already established in Chapter Two that a mode relates to a substance's affection (Idef5), and an affection is the body's power to act in terms of its affective state (IIIdef3). The definition of

mode refers to a substance – so what is a substance for Spinoza? A substance is that which is in and of itself and does not require another concept to continue in its existence (Idef3). Substances therefore cannot produce each other (IP6), and each substance has its own attribute – an attribute is an essence which is known through intellect (Idef4). To bring these definitions together: a will is a mode of thinking, and a mode is a substance's affection. This means that the will relates to a distinct substance and the power of that substance to affect and act. The will being a "mode of thinking" (IP32D, 21) is significant because it means the individual human body which is undertaking the thought of will is not entirely in control; the will ultimately is caused to exist by a substance. Crucially here in Spinoza's conception, a substance is necessarily its own cause (to be in and of itself) (IP7pr). From this the importance of causality in Spinoza's conception of will and how humans act can be understood. Consequently it is imperative to begin to see beyond the will only as an illusion in order to understand how for Spinoza the body acts.

### *3.2. Causality*

In Spinoza's *Ethics* causality is a central concept, indeed it is the first to be defined: "By cause of itself I understand that whose essence involves existence, or that whose nature cannot be conceived except as existing." (Idef1, 1). To comprehend this fully: an essence is what makes up a substance (a substance being known to humans through attributes), and attributes can be known through the intellect (Idef4). An essence is absolute and therefore cannot change (Deleuze, 1997), and the intellect is the highest mode of understanding without error, and through which a true idea can be known (Spinoza, 1955b).

For Spinoza, causality is inherently linked to his understanding of God. By following this logic further, God is therefore linked to how Spinoza understands a body as acting. This is distinct from a Christian understanding of God, but is it inaccurate to say Spinoza rejects (a) God. Spinoza presents a clear notion of God as an infinite substance (Idef6), and therefore by this very definition must necessarily exist because the essence of the substance of God includes existence (IP11; IP11D). Spinoza continues this reasoning to conclude that God is necessarily the cause of all other substances and modes, and therefore the cause of all (human) bodies and their affections (VP14; VP22D). Spinoza argues this through his logic that God is the only substance to have infinity as part of its essence (IP16C3, 13; IP20). Therefore, for Spinoza "Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God." (IP15, 10). However, Spinoza's understanding of God within causality is not in a teleological manner towards an end goal or purpose for human action (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999), but rather one of univocity; God and the world are one (Grosz, 2017).

Spinoza (1951a, 292) refers to God's power (from being the first cause) as being the "natural right" through which other substances and bodies exist. This natural right is understood as "the very laws of nature, in accordance with which everything takes place, in other words, the power of nature in itself." (1951a, 292). In this sense Spinoza's understanding of God's place in the world is univocal; God and the world are within each other to some degree because existence can only be found in one sense (through God) (Smith, 2012). Spinoza portrays an extreme form of monism as his ontology (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999; Connolly, 2001). Through this ontology humans are not distinct to the rest of nature (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999) nor with more rights than any other part of nature (Montag, 1999). However, building upon knowledge stemming from imagination Spinoza (1951b) makes a distinction between human and divine law. Human law refers to how humans perceive life should be ordered, which when related to causality and freedom could be understood as stemming from imagination. Divine law is comparable, then, to the natural right in that it is the knowledge of God. Divine law, but not human law, is therefore universal and not context or time specific (1951b), because God is infinite and eternal (Idef6). Humans can form their own understanding of the world through human law, when in fact the world is formed and exists under divine law. For Spinoza the existence of humans is understood through God as the first cause, and secondly through divine law being privileged over human law. We can now understand that for Spinoza human bodies are caused to exist by God, which will have implications for will and affect, but what is Spinoza's understanding of a body? It is this which I turn to next, building upon the preliminary conceptions from Chapter Two.

The body for Spinoza is initially defined in terms of motion and rest (IIPXIIIAl). Framed within God as the first cause, how the body acts – and its motion and rest – becomes intertwined with the question of what a body is capable of doing. In relation to affect this is understood as a body's affective capacity. This is an oft cited concern of Spinoza's, most commonly through *Ethics* that "No one has yet determined what the body can do." (IIP2S, 71). In isolation from Spinoza's wider ontology this sentence appears to disregard the aforementioned points on causality. However, what is also significant is the surrounding text in which this sentence is positioned. Spinoza continues that a body is situated within nature and that its capabilities are unknown to the mind because the mind does not have complete knowledge of the body. What is significant for this argument is Spinoza's conclusion (IIP2S, 73):

So experience itself, no less clearly than reason, teaches that men believe themselves free because they are conscious of their own actions, and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined...

From this I emphasise that the affective capacity of bodies is placed within the wider ontology of a chain of causality: whilst bodies may be conscious of their actions, for Spinoza this does not mean that bodies cause their own actions but rather that these actions are determined by another and so on to God as the first cause (IP16C3).

### 3.3. Freedom

Whilst a body for Spinoza has not caused itself, this must be taken further because through the same logic a body also cannot be free because it cannot act from its own necessity (Idef7). This needs unpacking in order to be able to comprehend the full implications for how the body acts, both for an affect theory in the geography of religion and in affective geographies more broadly. In Spinoza's articulation a body must act through its own necessity to be free (1955a). Necessity throughout *Ethics* is understood in a logical sense in terms of not being possible of existing in another way (Idef7). Therefore, to Spinoza human freedom (like the will) is initially an illusion (Sharp, 2007). God being the cause of bodies does not, however, necessarily (in the sense of logic) mean that God causes individual actions. So can a body will to act? Or can a body freely choose an action? For Spinoza the implications of will and freedom for the body are alike: through imagination as the lowest form of knowledge humans can be under an illusion that they are always free and willing. By focussing upon how the body acts the question for the body in relation to affect becomes about the *power of action*. A body can affect and be affected, and its power to act can increase and decrease (IIdef3). The crucial question for how a body can act then becomes whether a body influence its own power to act, and therefore influence its received affections? Hence, to understand human action attention must be paid to affection as well as affect.

For Spinoza the primary way in which a body can increase its power to act is through increasing its knowledge (ideally through intuition as the highest form of knowledge (IIP40S)) because the more an affect is understood, the more power that can be gained from it (VP3C). However, humans are not born with this knowledge, but rather must gain it over time meaning some will gain more than others (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999). Reason, the second form of knowledge, can be found through common notions and adequate ideas, whilst intuition, the highest form of knowledge, comes directly from the adequate idea of God (IIP40S). What though are common notions and adequate ideas? A common notion refers to compatibility between two bodies (Deleuze, 1997). This means that when two bodies meet in an encounter there is joy and a positively shared relationship (as opposed to incompatibility and sadness) (Hardt, 1993). For Spinoza a common notion can be applicable to bodies in different degrees; some are applicable to all human bodies (for example motion

(Hardt, 1993)), and some common notions are specific to particular instances (IIP38; IIP39). An adequate idea for Spinoza as defined in *Ethics* is the equivalent of a true idea (IIdéf4), meaning that it is an adequate idea to God (IIP43D). Hardt (1993) expands the idea of adequacy as an idea being its own cause. In contrast, an idea can be inadequate meaning it is not its own cause, relating to the “product of encounter” (Ruddick, 2010, 36); this product being understood as the resulting affection. Linking this back to the three forms of knowledge, through adequacy intuition can come from reason, but not from imagination (VP28). Imagination is the form of knowledge which is easiest for the human mind to understand, but the mind strives for intuition which will allow the mind to understand more of the world (VP26). This in turn is beneficial to the mind because it receives lessened sad or negative affects (VP38) because more ideas are compatible with the body in its state of greater knowledge. Overall, a body can therefore increase its freedom by looking to increase the reason and intuition knowledge that it holds (Spinoza, 1951a).

This increase in knowledge relates to the body experiencing active rather than passive affections. In relation to causality, an active affection means that it is conceived in itself, whilst a passive affection is conceived not through itself, but through God (IIP39dem). Passive and active affections are therefore about the body's power to act in that active affections increase the power to act (and are therefore preferable for the body), whilst passive affections decrease the power of acting (Ruddick, 2010). However, passive affections are more common than active affections because of the chain of causality back to God as the first cause (IP16C3). Yet, through the idea of encounter, the body can endeavour to make a passive affection active through how it engages with that affection (Ruddick, 2010). The idea of freedom for the body is therefore about experiencing activity, and not passivity (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999). This is how through affect the body can be understood as acting. Consequently, whilst being the first cause for the body to exist, God for Spinoza can be interpreted as not necessarily causing individual actions for the body because humans have the ability to increase their capacity to act through engaging with active affections.

The point here is that over time, through active and passive affections how the body can act – and its affective capacity – are constructed as opposed to being pre-determined (Sharp, 2007). This point is crucial because it means that there is possibility within the body's action for change. Chiefly for Spinoza, then, the human body is caused to exist by God, and yet affection and affective capacity mean that God does not necessarily cause individual actions for the body. Through affect and freedom a body can therefore endeavour to increase its understanding of the superior forms of knowledge – reason and intuition – and secondly,

engage with and experience more active than passive affections. This allows the body to increase its power to act. Bringing these threads together, ultimately humans must move away from imagination and the illusion that they are the only bodies influencing their action. Rather, once external causes upon the body's affects are recognised, then the body is able to pertain a degree of freedom, and in this way to some extent to will or actively choose an action. Will through freedom then becomes about the power of a body to act through what it can affect, and how it is affected, and most significantly I move beyond understanding Spinozian will as an illusion.

#### 4. The Acting Body through Augustine

Taking the Spinozian affective body with its power to act on board, what is the role of faith for a person motivated (partly or wholly) by their faith to act, when this action is understood through affect? In turn, what are the implications of this beyond faithful bodies for how to understand affect; what can an Augustinian affirmation of will and freedom bring to a Spinozian understanding of affect that is broader than just a question of faith? These questions give a dual contribution from this chapter: for understanding the acting body in the geography of religion, and beyond this to question the mechanism of affect in affective geographies.

##### 4.1. *The Will as Human Decision Making*

The will for Augustine is central to human existence:

Again, men know that they possess will, and they also know that will implies existence and life... But no-one can possibly doubt that he lives and remembers, understands, wills, thinks, know, and judges. For even if he doubts, he lives... A man may doubt everything else, but he should not doubt any of these facts, for if they were not so, he could doubt of nothing.

Augustine (2006b, 85)

I can say that I am, I know, and I will... In these three – being, knowledge and will – there is one inseparable life, one life, one mind, one essence; and therefore, although they are distinct from one another, the distinction does not separate them.

Augustine (1976, 318)

This shows that by linking will to existence, Augustine presents the will as an unquestionable necessity. In *Confessions* Augustine (1976) forms a trinity of being, knowledge and will. However, rather than the will being an illusion, Augustine sees it as an integral part and contributor of human knowledge, and in turn of human existence. From being a part of human existence, in *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine (1964) makes a crucial link

between humans and God because he sees the will as a gift from God. It is this which is key to Augustine's understanding of how humans act; as caught up in humans' relationship with God. Interrogating this in relation to Spinozian acting bodies gives a perspective on how faithful bodies are both limited and given opportunities to act through their relationship with God.

#### *4.2. The Relationship between God and Humans*

Augustine's conception of God mirrors (and contributed towards) the dominant Christian understanding of God: as omnipotent, omniscient, omnigood, and just (Augustine, 1964). In relation to will, the significant point here is that God for Augustine is all powerful, but in being all good, could not have created evil; this means that the will is necessarily created by God and must be good (Augustine, 1964). Ergo, humans in an Augustinian – and wider Christian – understanding are part of God's creation but building upon Genesis 1:27 (The Bible, 1996), humans are created as distinct from animals and the rest of nature, in the image of God, and in debt to God (because of His creating them) (Augustine, 1964).

I shall compare an Augustinian and Spinozian conception of God, not to count similarities and differences, but to realise what each of their understandings brings to the other, particularly for an affective approach to faith-based research. Specifically in terms of an affective approach to faith, I can ascertain how Spinoza does have an understanding of (a) God, despite his excommunication from Judaism and rejection of Christianity (Deleuze, 1988). Therefore, cumulatively both Spinoza and Augustine relate human action to God.

Augustine and Spinoza each conceive humans and God as in some form of relationship. For Augustine (1958) the relationship between God and humans is personal, whilst for Spinoza the relationship is impersonal because humans are only linked to God by God being the first cause of human existence (1996, IP16C3), making it a unidirectional relationship. From Spinoza understanding God as the first cause, there are three consequences for the possible relationship between God and humans. First, it means to Spinoza that humans must necessarily love God (because God is their cause). Secondly, following on from this first point, humans necessarily cannot hate God (VP18). Thirdly, God cannot love humans in return because God cannot be affected or be any more perfect (VP17; VP17dem). These implications together mean that humans cannot strive for God to love them (VP19, VP19D, 169):

P19: He who loves God cannot strive that God should love him in return.

D: If a man were to strive for this, he would desire (by VP17C) that God, whom he loves, not be God.



It is therefore by logical necessity that Spinoza understands the relationship between God and humans to be impersonal because there cannot be a reciprocal relationship. Both Spinoza and Augustine emphasise, then, the possibility of love from humans to God, but differ in how this relationship plays out. Ultimately this places humans and God in a different form of causal relationship for Spinoza and Augustine, impacting upon the type of action that occur; for Spinoza, God interacts with humans but not vice versa (making this impersonal for human experience), whilst for Augustine, God and humans can interact together. This is significant in understanding how for both Spinoza and Augustine, their idea of God can impact upon how human action takes place. For Augustine, the will presents the potential for a break in this personal relationship between humans and God; the will provides the opportunity for humans to act against the will of God.

Secondly, Augustine and Spinoza's conceptions of God impact upon how they each understand the Bible and knowledge. I have already established that Spinoza has a ranking of three forms of knowledge. He relates the Bible below these forms of knowledge to superstition, and therefore false knowledge (Montag, 1999). However, the significant point of Scripture for Spinoza is not whether it is true or false, but whether it makes a person act (Montag, 1999). Accordingly the Bible can be understood as an external affect which influences people's action. For Augustine (1958) in *On Christian Doctrine* the Bible is where humans can find the will of God to influence their own action. This draws a parallel with Spinoza's understanding of the Bible; that it can be an affect upon the body which changes the body's affection by influencing future action. Similar to Spinoza's conception of knowledge, I saw in Chapter Two in reference to faith and religion that Augustine (1953c) also relates knowledge to reason in tiers: knowledge-reason, beliefs-authority, and opinion-error. Augustine therefore also prioritises reason in terms of knowledge, but then links belief to authority, which he finds in the Bible. Opinion, similar to imagination for Spinoza, Augustine disregards. Spinoza has generally been interpreted as rejecting both Judaism (which he was excommunicated from) and Christianity (Deleuze, 1988, 7):

[Spinoza was] an excommunicated Jew who rejected Christianity no less than the Judaism into which he was born, and owed his break with the latter to himself alone. It is true that Spinoza's work caused a great deal of controversy in both the Jewish and Christian institutions. However, arguably Spinoza's philosophical idea of God does hold a degree of similarity to the Judaeo-Christian idea of God. Both perceive God as a creator/cause, of impacting upon humans, and with a relationship to humans to some degree. These points are important to acknowledge in order to understand the context in which Augustine and Spinoza each conceptualise human will and freedom. The implications

of this are found in how Augustine relates the will to evil and suffering the world, and the will as human freedom of choice, which I turn to next.

#### *4.3. The Will in Relation to Evil and Suffering*

In *On Free Choice of the Will* Augustine's (1964) understanding of evil is central to his understanding of will meaning that I cannot explore one without the other for an understanding of how the body acts in relation to affect and will. For Augustine (1964) evil is a turning away from God (and God's innate goodness) through the human action which he (and others in Christianity) calls sin. In this understanding evil, will and action for the human body become intrinsically intertwined.

For Augustine (1964) the existence of evil in the world (which he takes as given) means that the will's existence is necessary. This is because due to Augustine's belief in the goodness of God, God cannot have created evil. Furthermore, to Augustine the will must also be good in itself because it has been created by God. However, for Augustine, through the will God also gives humans choice over how to act; meaning they can choose to act in a way that is understood as good or evil. Augustine (1964) is questioned how the will can be used for evil, raising the question who is responsible for evil. Augustine's response argues that the will being used for evil is not by necessity, but by human choice, and therefore God is not responsible for evil in the world. This makes an important distinction for Augustine between determination and foreknowledge: God as omniscient will foreknow the actions humans take, but does not determine these. In Spinozian language, consequently God is not a predetermined affect upon human action, but rather is a body that could or could not affect humans.

The immediate implications of Augustine's argument for how the affective body acts are clear: when humans are understood as having choice over their actions through will, then this can include how humans respond to evil. Whilst Augustine understands evil as a turning away from God, he also recognises the importance of responding to human suffering (Augustine, 1958). It is not the focus of this chapter to enter into the debate over whether there is a relationship between human suffering and evil in relation to punishment (for example as discussed by Connolly, 2002a). Rather, I refer to human suffering in relation to Christian doctrine (for Augustine and through to the present day) that presents suffering as a form of evil in that in God's originally perfect creation there was no suffering (Augustine, 1958; Lewis, 1996). I do this to present where most clearly the Christian understanding of will in relation to faith-based social action is found: through Augustinian thinking humans have the choice to act and respond to human suffering. Relating this to Spinoza's

understanding of human action, one significant question remains. How free are humans to act for Augustine, or are there other factors influencing human action for Augustine? If so these will be other affects impacting the body's capacity to act, the body's freedom, and ultimately how the body can act in a faith motivated action, or otherwise.

#### 4.4. *The Will as Freedom of Choice*

If freedom is understood for Augustine and faith-based social action in relation to moral obligation, then the idea of freedom of choice becomes more complicated. In *A Dictionary of Christian Ethics* freedom is defined "as freedom from sin and freedom for obedience to God." (JC Bennett, 1967, 133). This understanding of freedom, reflected in Augustine's conception of evil as a turning away from God, to some degree places limits upon human freedom because it is understood as preferable for humans to act towards God rather than towards evil (Augustine, 1964). For example, extending Christian doctrine on suffering as a form of evil, is Augustine's belief and wider Christian teaching that humans should respond to others' suffering (Augustine, 1958; Lewis, 1996). This forms what can be called moral obligation; that it is preferable for humans to align their will with the will of God than not (B. Williams, 1981). One such way for Augustine (1958) that humans may identify the will of God is through the Bible. This is important because accordingly the Bible be an external affect which influences people's action. Consequently, moral obligation to God – which can be ascertained through the Bible – can be understood as an affect which affects the actions a faithful body will undertake.

The full implications of moral obligation in relation to the will and human action are crucial. For the philosopher Bernard Williams (1981) a moral obligation means that it must be possible for that action to be carried out. In the same way that for Spinoza what a body can do is identified through its affective capacity, here a moral obligation must be within a person's affective capacity. In turn, Connolly (2002a) argues that for Augustine the will is not wholly free because ultimately it is obedient to God. Whether this is argued or implied by Augustine is questionable, but as Connolly also argues, guilt and confession are key foci in Augustine's texts and notably in *Confessions*. In *Confessions*, Augustine (1976) finds it necessary to confess to God sinful acts that he has knowingly committed, and sinful acts which he may have committed through a lack of knowledge of what he was doing. If humans can commit evil unknowingly through a lack of knowledge, then this is problematic for the understanding that humans have freedom of choice over whether to act towards good or evil. When combined with the notion of moral obligation over how humans *should* act, and the received affection of guilt when acting against God, the idea of humans' freedom of choice becomes increasingly questionable.

Moving forward, how can Augustine's faithful body be understood more specifically in relation to how Spinoza understands faith? Spinoza (1951b) understands faith as being about human obedience (primarily to the Scripture), and as something which must be manifested through action in order to exist (Montag, 1999). Obedience for Spinoza is a desire to act towards goodness (which for Spinoza is the compatibility between bodies, or common notions) (VP10dem). Spinoza's understanding of faith therefore draws a parallel with the Augustinian/Christian idea of moral obligation: for Spinoza humans can choose their actions to some degree, but it is preferable for them if the action is in line with God's will and essence.

Overall Augustine understands the will as a gift from God that is fundamental to human existence. This is because the will for Augustine provides a means by which humans (and not God) are responsible for the existence of evil and suffering the world; the will means humans can choose to act towards good or evil. However, the idea of moral obligation and obedience towards God problematises the degree to which humans are truly free to choose how to act. I have found that Spinoza also understands humans as ideally acting towards love of God, and faith as something which is manifest through action. More precisely, the presumption that Spinoza denies, and Augustine affirms the existence of will can be challenged to show that for each the body acts with both freedom and limitations.

## **5. Conclusions: the Acting Body to Take Forward**

I have been concerned here with the need for greater attention to *how*, through affect, the body acts. This is important to understand action in any context within affect theory, but is particularly significant for analysing faith-motivated action within the geography of religion. This is because when faith motivates – or contributes to a motivation to act – then there is an assumption that will exists. However, we cannot assume that this action is taking place and use affect theory to analyse that action, but rather must understand how the body is capable of acting in the first place. Hence I have critically analysed the association of Spinoza with the denial of will in order to understand the acting body in both faith-based contexts, and for action more broadly. Such an approach therefore contributes to understanding both the mechanism of affect in affective geographies, and to the development of key foci in the geography of religion: how to understand faith as performed in people's daily lives, and with relevance to wider society.

Across the social sciences it has been assumed that Spinoza denies the existence of the will by portraying will and freedom as illusions. An illusion follows for Spinoza from imagination as the lowest form of knowledge. This means that to Spinoza, humans are not aware of the causes of their actions because all of nature is caused by God as the first cause. However, through affects and affections, and the higher forms of knowledge (reason and intuition) it is possible for the body to become more aware of the causes under which it is acting. Here the concept of freedom for Spinoza is constructed because through affect a body can increase its capacity to act by engaging with compatible bodies and active affections (as opposed to passive affections). Therefore, for Spinoza a body acts by being influenced by causes beyond itself, and by increasing its own power to act.

Faith can be a significant motivator for action, and operates at times alongside other motivations. What are the implications from the Spinozian acting body, when a body is partaking in (partly or wholly) faith motivated action? I have made this conversation with Augustine because he is a canonical thinker of will, and an influential philosopher. The starting point for Augustine's understanding of human action is that the will is fundamental to human existence, and a gift from God. Whilst Augustine and Spinoza fundamentally understand God differently, there are significant likenesses for how human action can be understood as taking place through Spinoza and Augustine. Both Spinoza and Augustine understand God as the cause of creation, and that through this humans have some degree of a relationship with God. It is not the degree of similarities and differences that are significant here. What is significant for this argument is that along with Augustine, Spinoza does not deny the existence of (a) God, and that this God can affect (or motivate) human action. The relation of the will to God necessitates the question, for Augustine, how can an omnigood God have allowed humans to undertake evil acts? Augustine finds the answer in assigning the causality of evil to the will, not God, and understands evil as a turning away from God. However, this raises the importance for Augustine of confession and the ideal of a person acting towards God which can be called moral obligation. It is here that it is shown – as Spinoza argues – that there are also limits upon the body as understood through Augustine. This is because if and when a person of Christian faith is morally obliged to act in a particular way, for example volunteering to help others, then this questions the extent to which they are entirely free. Ergo, just as Spinoza argues that humans are ignorant of the causes through which they act, what this discussion has drawn out is that the faithful body is acting through an external cause from their faith in God which is not under human control. This point is important in overcoming the perceived binary of Spinoza and Augustine as denying and affirming the will. Therefore, the full implications of how Spinoza and Augustine understand how a body acts are not so different: both are influenced by previous causes, but

can also increase their capacity to act through knowledge and decision making to some degree.

The implications of this perspective on how the body acts are twofold. First, within affective geographies this gives a more encompassing understanding of affect in relation to human bodies. Such a focus allows this research to engage with how the body comes to act (through affections of past actions), and the consequence of this action for future action (again through affections). This includes recognising the influence of external influences (received affections) upon action, but also the potential for the human body to engage with active affections and through increasing its knowledge, to endeavour to instigate in its own affects. Secondly, this understanding of the acting body has implications for an affective approach to faith-based research in the geography of religion and related disciplines. In this way, the conversation contributes to the development of the geography of religion and its attention to religious experience. More precisely, it has the implication of allowing us to utilise affect theory to analyse faith-based religious experience/action in a way that has not fully denied the existence of Christian will, goes further to raise the ontological status of faith in research, and is not incompatible with a Christian understanding of action. For such an approach it is not necessary for Spinoza and Augustine's conceptions to be identical; this is not possible. Rather, enquiries need to recognise the role of both the human body itself and other external factors in how the body comes to act. This will allow faith to be appreciated as a factor in the body's action, whilst recognising that the body is also influenced by other affections.

Bringing Chapter Two together with this chapter, what distinct insight does affect theory give for understanding faith-based volunteering? There are five main insights, the first three of which I reiterate briefly from Chapter Two. First, affect theory gives us the opportunity to analyse faith in a way that recognises the ontological status that it holds for faithful subjects and the power that faith holds in motivating action. Secondly, affect theory allows us to take full advantage of the researcher and participants having shared religious positionalities because this means that the depth of analysis is changed by shared, mutual understandings. Thirdly, following Lorimer's (2005, 84) conception of "more-than-representational" theories, when a person is motivated by their faith to volunteer, affect allows us to appreciate that to the volunteer, the experience means "more-than" what is represented in the action itself, such as giving food. Therefore, by virtue of a person's faith linking to their belief in God, faith motivated volunteering relates to something that is more-than what is represented in the volunteering action, which non-representational theories can address in going beyond that which is directly represented (B. Anderson and Harrison,

2010a). This reflects the concern in the geography of religion to emphasise the spiritual elements of religious experience, rather than simply the action that faithful subjects are carrying out (for example see the discussion by Holloway, 2011a).

Fourthly, affection is important for understanding the impact that volunteering has upon the volunteer. Affect focusses on the body's power to act, affection on how the body is affected, and affective capacity on what the body can next do (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3). Like affect, an affection is beyond the body, and yet once experienced an affection gives the opportunity to repeat an action with the expectation (although not certainty) of how they will be affected. Affection is therefore crucial for the thesis argument to come because the potential for a person to engage with how they are affected in turn gives an opportunity for a person to become more aware of the conditions under which they are acting, and increase their power to act – and therefore their will – in the future. Furthermore, affection emphasises not only volunteers' affects upon others, but also how through affections they are capacitated for future action. To reiterate, the volunteer's affective capacity – not just the traditional recipient's – is changed by the volunteering experience because bodies are relational (Vannini, 2015a). Faith is one such affect in that scenario, affecting the body's power to act, and also in turn nudging the body into further action. In this way, an affect theory approach to volunteering builds upon the key concern in the geography of religion to take religious experience and thought beyond worship spaces to recognise the wider role that faith can play in society (A. Williams et al., 2016).

The final insight that affect theory gives for understanding volunteering is that the combination of affect and affection, and its production of affective capacities, shows how we can understand volunteering as a *process*; how different factors from the past, present and the anticipated future feed into volunteers' motivations to continue volunteering or not. This is an important contribution from affect theory to how to understand volunteering. This is because the combination of affect and affection in action means that once faith is understood in terms of affect, then in terms of action it is what results from these affects – ergo how we are affected – that is crucial for how we act in the future, and persist in acting or not. Building upon this, in affect theory, each and every experience has the potential to affect a body (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3), it is not the duration of the event that makes it significant, but rather how the body is affected (Dewsbury, 2010b). Therefore, by prioritising individual moments as much as routine, affect provides a means to make manifest the fleeting moments of faith-based volunteering which otherwise may go unacknowledged but crucially affect the volunteer's future action. As I take further in Chapter Five, fleeting

moments can therefore be as significant as longer events, and affect theory emphasises the potential force of affection in any experience.

These insights also emphasise how this research takes a particular approach to affect theory and non-representational theories. As I acknowledged in Chapter Two, there is not one single non-representational theory because different interpretations have developed over the last three decades. Specifically, this research follows Lorimer's (2005, 84) understanding of "more-than-representational" theories. This means that the emphasis is upon what is "more-than" represented in an experience, rather than putting the focus upon what is not represented or cannot be represented. Furthermore, and significantly for this research, such an approach is not against representation: in this research my own and volunteers' experiences will be captured in diaries and interviews which are then transcribed and quoted in the analysis in Chapters Six and Seven. If a non-representational theory approach was anti-representation, then such representation in diary and interview quotes would be contrary to the chosen philosophy. However, by following "more-than" representation, I do not understand such representations as being contrary. Rather, diaries and interviews are a way to capture what meaning the experience of volunteering did hold for volunteers that at times was about "more-than" what was represented in the actions themselves, for example the cooking and giving of food. It is in this way that affect and affection in this research are understood in terms of human action through Spinoza – an affect is beyond the human body, and an affection is how the body is affected for future action – but how an affection is experienced and an affect perceived can, to some extent, be captured in people's diaries and interviews as they report on, react to and reflect on, experiences. Arguably no experience can ever be entirely captured, but a more-than representational theory approach goes a significant way in ascertaining the meaning that volunteering experiences held for volunteers. To some extent such an approach differs from the wider non-representational theories tradition in which this approach is framed. This is because I am less concerned with the methodological question of how to represent experience (Dewsbury, 2010b) or the ineffability of experience (Wilford, 2015), but rather I am concerned with how it is in a faith-social action context that experience can hold more meaning to the volunteer than what is outwardly or explicitly represented in their actions. This research also largely departs from recent work in non-representational theories to focus upon affective atmospheres (for example by Ash, 2013; B. Anderson, 2014; Closs Stephens, 2016), which I discussed in Chapter Two. Whilst I recognise in Chapter Eight the potential for future research on faith-based volunteering to following enquiry into affective atmospheres, this thesis primarily focusses upon individuals' experiences without this collective dimension of affect theory because atmospheres did not emerge as a key theme in the analysis of volunteers'



interviews and diaries. This said, rather than being a purposeful departure, the inclusion of affective atmospheres in this research remains a possible future extension of the research questions, for example with the inclusion of focus groups in the research methodology. Finally, as detailed in Chapter Two and earlier in this chapter, this research's interpretation of affect theory focusses upon Spinoza rather than much of affective geography's focus on Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza (for example by Thrift, 2004; 2008; Dewsbury, 2010a), and also primarily upon human bodies rather than non-human bodies, which follows Spinoza's emphasis in *Ethics* but is a break from calls by affective geographers to include the non-human as much as the human (for example by Ash, 2013).

I pause here to reiterate the overall research aim and the three research questions:

*Aim:* To think faith and affect theory through each other, in order to question how humans will and have a capacity to act, specifically as volunteers for social action

1. How can we understand our capacity and will to act?
2. How do we have the capacity and will to reflect upon our actions?
3. How is there an impact of having acted and reflected upon persistence of action?

Approaching these questions through affect theory and people of faith volunteering in faith-based organisations facilitates a multi-level understanding of action. How the body acts – how faith affectively influences it, and how experience then affects the body for future action – are key questions that this research responds to, specifically at a faith-based project responding to holiday hunger. Through these questions I focus on the faithful subjects – volunteers – as they are both affected, and in turn affect. Through affect theory this gives an insight into people's capacity and will to act; why and how people desire to help other people in need. From this question I can explore the degree to which faith wills, and the degree that faith is an affect. The second question focuses attention to the time after the initial volunteering experiences: how reflection takes place, leading to the third question around how past experiences may impact upon their future action; will they continue to volunteer? Here affection comes to the fore as I explore the impact upon the volunteer of their experiences at Lunch. Consequently I recognise the impact of the past as a cause for future action, which bodies may feel is within or beyond their control. Addressing question one in the first analytical chapter and the remaining questions in the second analysis chapter breaks down motivation and performance, which is not to say that they are disparate. Rather, it is to focus our attention on people's experience leading up to volunteering, and subsequently their experiences at Lunch.

Approaching the research questions through affect theory moves beyond the individual human subject to emphasise the importance of contextual relations in people's capacity to act and then maintain (or not) that action. Through this, as I have established, this approach contributes to both the geography of religion and affective geographies, but it also goes beyond these. This is because the specific context of the research, responding to holiday hunger, is important both academically, in policy making, and in public understanding. In an academic context I look to move beyond the statistics of food poverty to people's experience of responding to need. Secondly, with faith-based organisations increasingly being the means through which people respond to hunger, if hunger is to be successfully alleviated it is crucial to understand why and how people are acting. This research therefore has both academic and policy making implications which I explore in Chapter Eight. It is to the specific empirical context of the research to which I now turn.



## **Chapter Five: Methodology: Facilitating and Engaging with Action**

### **1. Introduction**

This research prioritises a combination of theory and action. A non-representational understanding of the world recognises that an action can have more meaning to acting subjects than what is explicitly represented to others in that action (Lorimer, 2005). This is advantageous for understanding faith-based social action because it allows research to recognise that faith is not always explicit in the action, for example giving food, but can be of vital importance to volunteers. How though can I methodologically approach this combination of theory and action? This chapter responds to this question, thereby setting the foundation and interpretative framework for the subsequent analysis chapters.

The chapter is formed of five sections. First, I position the research within action research, participatory geographies, and ethnography. I will use an amalgamation of these methodologies to push for research that enacts positive social change, works collaboratively with a community outside of academia, and critically challenges and interprets power and positionality in the research process. Secondly, I outline the social action project undertaken. In brief, I ran and established a project responding to holiday hunger through a national faith-based charity MakeLunch. The project relied upon volunteers to run, and our narratives form the basis of this research's analysis. The final three sections of the chapter explore three methodological themes: the passing of time; knowledge formation; and positionality and power. Through these themes, I will explain the specific research methods used – solicited diaries, interviews, and my own participation and observation – and position these in relation to affect theory. These themes present challenges and opportunities in the research process, particularly pushing for an interpretation of power and positionality as positive opportunities rather than limiting factors. Through this I will draw out the multiple volunteering narratives that will be taken forward into the analysis chapters, and highlight the participatory insight that these contributions make with an affect theory approach.

I conclude the chapter by arguing that this combination of action research, participatory, and ethnographic methodologies with affect theory provides an insightful window to faith-based social action. How? I established in Chapter Two that non-representational theories, specifically affective geographies, provide a means to analyse the totality and ontological status of faith-based action. However, in order to do this, the action itself needs to be grasped. So, by partaking in that very action, the combination of action research, participatory geographies and ethnography gives access to the action and experience of

faith-based social action. Consequently, action as a topic of research is matched with methodological action.

## **2. Action Research, Participatory and Ethnographic Methodologies**

Action research, participatory geographies and ethnographies are methodological practices rather than exacting methods (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012; Pain et al., 2013; Pink, 2015). This means that they provide an approach to doing research rather than specific guidelines to be followed. Additionally, each overlaps to some degree; in particular in this research context I frame participatory geographies as a discipline specific interpretation of action research. In this section I conceptually examine action research, participatory geographies and ethnography in turn, highlighting their key characteristics in order that the remainder of this chapter can discuss their application to the research.

### **2.1. Action Research**

Action research, or participatory action research, is a methodology with multiple definitions that share common characteristics (Brydon-Miller and Hilsen, 2016). Most significantly, action research methodologies emphasise positive social change during and after research, collective knowledge formation, and acknowledging and addressing power and privilege (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). Furthermore, there are epistemological implications beyond the methodology of using action research (Pain et al., 2013) because knowledge is understood as co-produced (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012). Co-production of knowledge challenges the traditional dominance of the researcher in knowledge production, instead valuing knowledge of both research participants and the researcher (Brydon-Miller and Hilsen, 2016). The binary of the researcher and researched is therefore challenged in action research, with importance placed on trust between people as a means to gain and develop knowledge (Kindon et al., 2009a; Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012). This includes valuing local knowledge of research participants, rather than the researcher imposing ideas (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). Consequently, action research methodologies do not understand knowledge as being objective, and emphasise context specific understanding and knowledge rather than aiming to find world view generalisations (Greenwood, 2015). Linking this epistemology with a desire for positive social change, typically in action research the researcher will work with community members and research participants in order to identify a local problem that the research can work towards improving, or ideally resolving (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). Through this action research emphasises research as being a cyclical process of action and reflection (Cahill, 2009). This is significant because it means an action research project cannot be planned prescriptively in its entirety in advance, but rather the

researcher must with the other participants reflect and react as the research develops. However, these characteristics are not without contestation. At times they are understood as ideals of action research but difficult to reach in practice (Garrett and Brickell, 2015). Overall action research is distinct as a methodology in challenging traditional modes of research that privilege the researcher, and instead endeavours for positive social change as opposed to being purely a way of gaining an understanding of the world.

Just as there are multiple definitions of action research, so there are multiple identifiable trajectories of its history (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). One of the key influences on the origin of action research has been the twentieth century psychologist Kurt Lewin, who used action to test theory. Participatory action research can, then, be seen as coming through local contexts of research in Latin America, India and Africa in the 1970s through a focus on international community development (Kindon et al., 2009b; Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). By the 1990s participatory action research and action research were less distinguishable as separate methodologies (Kindon et al., 2009b). However, for Kindon et al. (2009b) action research does not necessarily involve the research participants to the same degree as participatory action research. It is for this reason that with reference to my own research I refer to action research over participatory action research. Due to the overlap in terms, henceforth I also refer to action research where the original literature referenced may have referred to participatory action research.

Action research is a methodology whose bearing stems across multiple disciplines (Greenwood, 2015). In human geography the applications are numerous: to feminist theories around equality and value; to postcolonialism and questions of power and authority; to the cultural turn including the emotional turn questioning knowledge, and the material turn valuing the non-human (Pain et al., 2009). One of the reasons action research is widely applicable as a methodology is due to its epistemology because it does not have a “singular or fixed version of reality awaiting detection” (Pain et al., 2009, 28). Building upon this, I now turn to participatory geographies which I understand as the discipline specific interpretation of action research.

## 2.2. *Participatory Geographies*

The twenty-first century has seen an increase in participatory approaches to research in geography (Kesby, 2007; Wynne-Jones et al., 2015). Participatory geographies can be understood as the discipline specific interpretation of action research. For example, geographers Sara Kindon, Rachel Pain and Mike Kesby are editors of the *Routledge Studies in Human Geography* (2009) collection *Participatory Action Research Approaches and*

*Methods*; human geography and participatory action research are somewhat synonymous in this title. Thereby, just as this research can be aligned with action research, specifically within geography it aligns with participatory geographies. In this research I refer to both action research and participatory geographies in order to emphasise the research relevance both within human geography, and more broadly in the social sciences.

Participatory geographies and action research therefore share common methodological characteristics. Pain (2004) highlights these characteristics in relation to the place of participatory geographies in social geography: ownership of the research with participants, engaging with marginalised groups, and an importance placed on addressing power and ethical relationships. A further key shared characteristic is the emphasis on the co-production of knowledge between the researcher and research participants (Pain et al., 2011), thereby looking to involve groups or people beyond academia in the research questions and research process (Wynne-Jones et al., 2015). One means through which this has been actioned in participatory geographies is by using volunteering as a participatory research method. For example, M. Williams (2016, 514) used volunteering to investigate questions around justice and care in co-operative food practices in Sydney, Australia: “I argue that researcher volunteering can help reveal actually existing justice and care in the city in their situated context.” Volunteering therefore allowed Williams to gain more insight into these questions than she could have gained with other methods, for example stand-alone interviews.

A second way in which participatory geographies can involve groups outside of academia is through work with practitioners. The growing prominence of this is reflected in the increase in the presence of participatory geographies in undergraduate teaching, for example in the practical module of students working with practitioners and community groups at Durham University (Pain et al., 2013). Mason et al. (2013) argues that geographers should look to collaborate more with practitioners in order to combine the former wanting to know why societal issues arise and occur, and the latter wanting to know how to address societal questions. Participatory geographies provide a means, then, to bridge this perceived gap between researchers and others. Bell and Nutt (2008) provide examples of this through Nutt being a practitioner in the foster care sector, and also researching this topic. They show that this provides both opportunities and challenges, particularly around power and positionality, in that the researcher/practitioner has multiple identities that overlap in time and specific actions. A critical discussion of power and positionality – acknowledging opportunities and challenges for the researcher and research process – is central to all three methodologies used in this research. Of course, other research methodologies also discuss power and

positionality. However, action research is unique in exploring power and positionality in relation to aspiring for positive social change, prioritising collective knowledge formation, and challenging the prominence of a researcher over other participants. I continue this discussion with empirical application in the third methodology theme in this chapter.

### *2.3. Ethnography*

The final methodology that this research is aligned to is ethnography. Once again, ethnography is a methodology utilised in multiple disciplines including human geography. Ethnography is often similar in its characteristics to action research and participatory methodologies, and indeed Watson and Till (2010) view participatory action research as a form of ethnography. However, there are some elements which distinguish it from action research and participatory geographies, notably the emphasis on observation as well as participation.

Ethnography is a methodology that emphasises the process of the production of knowledge over the collection of data (Pink, 2013, 34):

[Ethnography is] an approach to experiencing, interpreting and representing experience, culture, society and material and sensory environments that informs and is informed by sets of different disciplinary agendas and theoretical principles.

Ethnographer Sarah Pink (2015) focusses upon a particular form of ethnography: sensory ethnography. Sensory ethnography gives an approach to the world that engages with the senses in order to develop experience in itself, and as knowledge. Ethnography is often combined with participant observation as a researcher spends time observing and participating with a community to develop an understanding of a particular issue (Butz, 2010). This combination of observation and participation makes ethnography particularly suitable for exploring social issues because it allows the researcher to be one step removed from the situation and to ascertain the different factors at play. A recent example of this is the work of Michele Lancione (2016a) on homelessness in Turin, Italy in which he undertook an ethnography at two Catholic faith-based projects and with local homeless people in order to re-envision how homelessness can be approached both as an experience and politically. A second example is the aforementioned work by Andrew Williams at a Christian drug rehabilitation centre. Williams (2017) undertook a residential ethnography in which he lived at the centre as a researcher/guest for two months and took part in the centre's day-to-day activities. He acknowledges that his position as a researcher meant that he did not always give his own opinion in conversations in order to avoid controversy and be able to remain at the centre for the research. This removal of the researcher to some degree, and the



emphasis more on observation than participation makes ethnography distinct from action research and participatory geographies.

As found in action research and participatory geographies, within ethnography there is debate over the role of the researcher. As the geographer and ethnographer Cindi Katz (1992) discusses, historically there was a view that the researcher – specifically the ethnographer – should not present themselves in their ethnographic writing. However, Katz (1992, 496) continues: “there, of course, could be no ethnography without the ethnographer.” The role of the ethnographer is therefore important to how observation and participation are interpreted. As with action research, the researcher in ethnography is neither an outsider nor insider (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). This is particularly complex in autoethnography – an ethnography of the researcher – in how the researcher positions and reveals them self (Mason, 2015), hence their positionality. Autoethnography therefore provides a means to connect what is personal for the researcher to broader cultural events or occurrences (Ellis and Bochner, 2000).

It is this element of observation (with participation) that I take forward to combine with action research and participatory geographies, particularly the method of writing a diary in order to capture knowledge and begin reflection. An ethnographic view of positionality is also useful when combined with that which is found in action research in order to highlight the positive role a researcher’s position can play in the research process, rather than seeing this as a limiting factor that should not influence academic writing.

#### *2.4. Methodologies Moving Forward*

This research combines elements of each of these methodologies in my running of a social action project. It aligns most closely with the ethos of action research and participatory geographies – the latter I understand as a discipline specific variation of the former – with elements of ethnography. Action research and participatory geographies emphasise more than ethnography (aside from autoethnography) the role of the human researcher in the research process and making sense of experience, rather than focussing on other human bodies as the object of study. Most importantly in terms of action research and participatory geographies this research aspires to result in positive social change, albeit focussed at a local community level in response to individual children’s holiday hunger.

Action research and participatory geographies’ key characteristic of a desire for positive social change highlights the importance of research dissemination. This research is to be

disseminated to multiple groups in both academic and non-academic settings. The means of dissemination will be discussed in the conclusion of this research. Here, I highlight the importance of dissemination within action research and participatory geographies. Whilst research dissemination is encouraged by a variety of research approaches, for action research, participatory geographies and ethnography it is crucial to share research findings with participants (ideally working with them to do this) and to groups beyond the direct participants. Questions likely to be asked by research participants are “‘what do you want from me’ and ‘what are you going to do with this material?’” (Lancione, 2016b, 2). It is important therefore to have thought through these questions in advance. When research investigates issues around a social justice issue – such as responding to food poverty – it is imperative that there is research impact both within and beyond the academic setting. Prime examples of this are Lancione’s use of (2016b) ethnographic novel writing in his research on homelessness in Turin, Italy, and Garthwaite’s (2016) book *Hunger Pains. Life inside foodbank Britain* which was written to a lay audience to increase awareness of foodbanks and food poverty. Action research therefore prioritises impact (Cahill and Torre, 2009), although the idea of impact remains a contested notion (for example see Pain et al., 2011; 2012; T Slater, 2012a). Different means of communication and writing are appropriate for research to be disseminated to individual groups (Cahill and Torre, 2009) and it is crucial that research findings are communicated in accessible language (Mason et al., 2013).

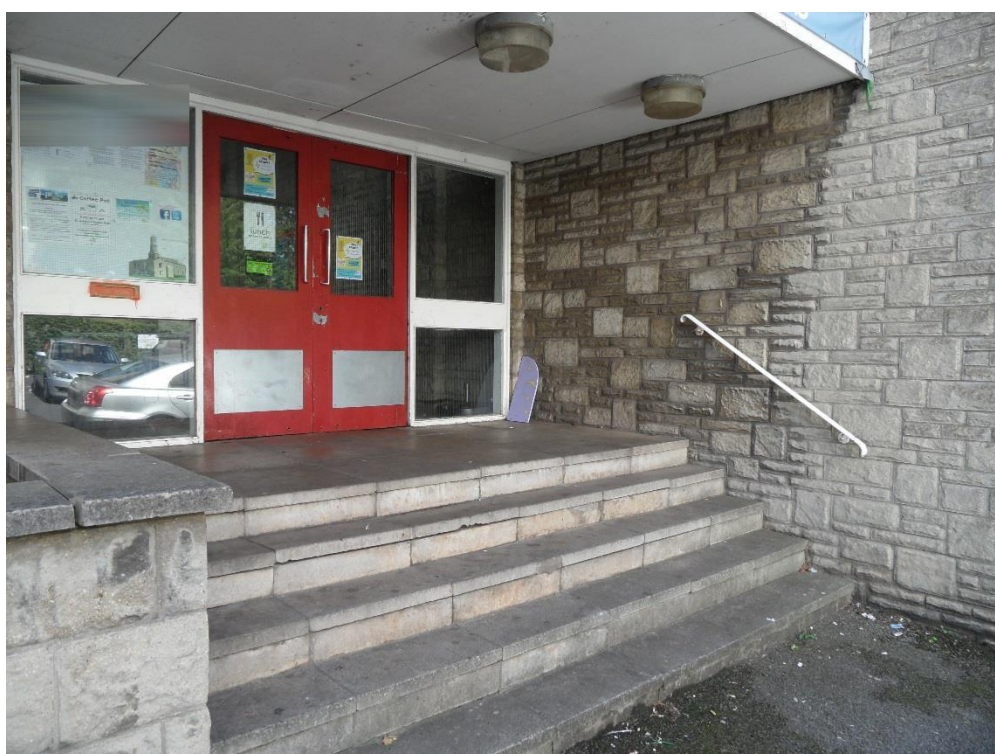
Having explicated the key characteristics of action research, participatory geographies, and ethnography, the remainder of this chapter discusses these in relation to the specific research context. First I turn to the details of the social action project itself; a MakeLunch project.

### **3. The MakeLunch Project**

Over twenty months (February 2015 to September 2016) I established and ran a faith-based social action project through MakeLunch. Being a national social franchise, MakeLunch has projects across the UK. MakeLunch is a faith-based organisation with a statement of faith in its charity constitution (MakeLunch, 2014) that clearly meets many of the characteristics of a faith-based organisation as presented by Sider and Unruh (2004); the organisation has a faith-based foundation, management and staff members. However, the faith element is less overt in its mission statement of “filling the holiday hunger gap” (MakeLunch, 2016), although many projects take place in churches and at the time of writing all are run by churches. Within the characteristics of the project itself – serving food to children in the school holidays – the faith element is less explicit still which makes the organisation’s typology as a faith-

based organisation more complex (Sider and Unruh, 2004). Furthermore, the organisation runs as a social franchise, giving room for interpretation at individual projects: the majority do not include Christian teaching as part of the programme but there remains the possibility to do so. Therefore, whilst MakeLunch is clearly a faith-based organisation, there is not a universal degree to which faith is explicit at projects across the UK. MakeLunch projects respond to children's holiday hunger which as I explored in Chapter Three is when children do not have enough (nutritional food) to eat in the school holidays. In response to this, MakeLunch projects provide the equivalent of a free school meal during the school holidays with most running in school halls, community centres or churches.

In this research the location (project name, area and church) in which I established the project are anonymous in order to protect people's identities and maintain confidentiality. I will therefore refer to the project as 'Lunch'. Lunch ran in a church hall adjoined to a church in an inner city area that is in the top 5% of deprived areas of the UK (DCLG, 2015). In responding to injustice and aspiring to enact social change, the project clearly aligns with the ideals of action research and participatory geographies (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011).



Under my co-ordination Lunch ran for forty-three days over fifteen months; each school holiday from July 2015 to September 2016 (see appendix one). Over this time Lunch served 774 meals to 103 local primary school aged children. Some children attended regularly, and others not. As well as providing a hot, healthy meal with a main course, salad, fruit and dessert, a significant part of the project was providing an hour of play time for the children



with cooking activities, sports, crafts and games. This distinguishes MakeLunch projects from a project such as a soup kitchen as the emphasis is upon children attending a holiday club rather than having a quick meal.



Lunch relied upon volunteers to run with some volunteers cooking the meals ('the cooking team') and other volunteers running the play activities ('the play team'). Over the twenty

months of establishing and running Lunch, I recruited seventy-eight volunteers from local and surrounding areas, 75% of whom were from local churches. Volunteers varied in age, spanning from teenagers to adults over eighty years old. Some volunteers came from within the church in which Lunch ran, and many from outside of the church. Recruitment took place through social media, local contacts and email newsletters, the Church of England diocese in which the church is situated, and my own talks at church services. Volunteer recruitment was an ongoing process with regular emails updating current team members on when volunteers were next required. Consequently my role took on one of project management. Another key component for the project to be able to function was my successful writing of funding applications. After forming and implementing a food hygiene strategy, I planned the meals and sourced the food in advance from a local foodbank and greengrocer free of charge, and bought other items at a local supermarket. I also planned the play activities with the church's children's workers. In this chapter, and Chapters Six and Seven, photographs that I took at Lunch between July 2015 and September (with people's permission) are used to accompany diary and interview extracts to help the reader to foster their own sensory, colourful, atmospheric understanding of my own and other volunteers' experiences. The photographs are without captions and instead used to accompany the surrounding text to enhance the reader's evolving impression of Lunch.

During the twenty month period three themes were highlighted by the choice of methodologies: the passing and commitment of time in establishing and co-ordinating the project, addressing knowledge formation, and first acknowledging and then secondly addressing issues around power and privilege.

#### **4. Passing of Time: the Ongoing, Mundane and Transient**

Building upon the aspiration for positive social change, commitment from the researcher to the community group and/or organisation involved in the research is a key characteristic of action research. In action research it is therefore important that the researcher commits their time to the project beyond the minimum time required to undertake the research, and makes this commitment as open-endedly as possible. Greenwood (2012) suggests that action research in a doctoral thesis should at least cover the length of the doctorate. It is questionable how practical Greenwood's suggestion is within institutional requirements (and restrictions). However, in this research my involvement with MakeLunch is likely to continue beyond the length of my doctorate and as I will show below, commitment has already continued beyond the formal 'fieldwork' period. It was important from the outset to myself, the church involved, and MakeLunch that the project should be sustainable beyond the

length of my doctoral research. This was also a criterion of MakeLunch agreeing to my undertaking research with their organisation. We agreed that from a research ethics point of view, the project should not simply serve my doctoral research and measures would be taken to ensure sustainability, details of which are considered here and in relation to positionality and power.

Stemming from action research's emphasis upon the commitment of the researcher to the community group and time with the community, this section is structured around the periods of time spent at Lunch. My involvement with Lunch can be divided into three periods of time: before Lunch, the formal research period in which I ran Lunch, and then the period after my formal involvement when I handed over running of Lunch. The cyclical process of action and reflection in action research (Cahill, 2009) keeps each of these periods of time alive, and places importance upon each. Each of these illustrate different aspects of daily experience of being involved with the project through the ongoing, the mundane, and the transient. As I will justify, affect theory is a fitting match to this because it allows us to appreciate the transient, ongoing and mundane within these periods of time. Affect theory does not distinguish or make a hierarchy between the transient and ongoing. Affect theory therefore gives a new emphasis to different types of experience. It was hence important that my diary – detailed subsequently – was started at this formative stage in order to capture the already transient, fleeting and mundane moments and experiences.

#### *4.1. Start a MakeLunch Project? Formative Time*

The formative stage of an action research project should not be rushed (Wicks and Reason, 2009). I refer to formative in order to indicate the experiences that I had that contributed towards Lunch being established, but were not yet the formal research period of establishing and running Lunch.

This formative time began prior to the formal doctorate period with my volunteering at foodbanks and recognising that both at these foodbanks and nationally there is a problem of holiday hunger. Whilst as Pink (2015) argues, it is difficult or perhaps impossible to be completely prepared for research, my gaining an understanding of the sensitive topic of food poverty and how to respond to it – particularly from volunteering at foodbanks – was crucial. I identified MakeLunch as a charity responding to holiday hunger and recognised that the franchise model could work well for setting up a project when my prior experience was not insignificant but nevertheless limited.

Then began an exploratory period within the formative stage of visiting two other MakeLunch projects and learning more from the charity about what was involved before confirming that establishing and running a MakeLunch project was a route I wished to pursue. Assessing the feasibility of the project was important, both in terms of research and for choosing a specific church and area in which to run the project. Here I considered feasibility in terms of my capabilities to run it and the suitability of an area to meet a real need (Grant et al., 2008). Only at this stage (in January 2015) did I follow up a suggestion made by several connections about where this could take place and contacted the suggested church's leader to arrange a meeting. At this meeting I outlined my research idea and the proposal of running a MakeLunch project. From this early point, I emphasised my commitment of time and to project sustainability, reflecting the call within action research for longer term positive social change (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). It was ideal then to find that the church already wanted to develop their children's work and school holiday provision because this meant that from the outset we shared the aim that Lunch would continue beyond the duration of my research. This desire was built up further by all three methodologies looking for a research ethics that has a positive impact on the participants (as opposed to a traditional social science research ethics looking for no negative impact) (Pain, 2004).

After continuing conversations, developing preliminary relationships and visiting the church on several occasions, by February 2015 both the church's leader and I were in agreement that a MakeLunch project *could* suit the church and area. The director of MakeLunch also formally agreed that I could establish the kitchen and carry out my research with MakeLunch. The church's leader and the Director of MakeLunch were therefore to some degree gatekeepers for the research to take place, the former wanting to be certain of the project's viability before fully committing to the project starting. However, as A. Williams (2017) also found, beyond this overall permission, access would also need to be sought from individuals both individually for diaries and interviews, and to gain people's trust in order for the establishment of Lunch to be successful. From that time onwards, I refer to as the formal research period of initiating and co-ordinating Lunch. We – myself, the church leader, and director of MakeLunch – were also in agreement from this point that I would run the project for a set period of July 2015 to September 2016 and then handover the running to others (at that stage unidentified persons).

#### *4.2. Running Lunch: Ongoing and Transient time*

The formal research period: this was the experience of establishing one MakeLunch project in a specific location, and at a specific time over a twenty month period. Action research emphasises developing context specific understandings rather than world view generalisations (Greenwood, 2015). I therefore do not aim nor claim to be representative of MakeLunch as an organisation, nor representative of the totality of experience of this particular project. Rather, I am concerned with moments in the daily experience of running Lunch and the experiences of other volunteers at Lunch. This builds upon calls and encouragement made by Milbourne (2010) and Sonnino and Hanmer (2016) for more place-based understandings of responses to food poverty. Whilst it is true that participation as a part of research can give unexpected results (Watson and Till, 2010), I am also concerned with the mundane, daily logistics of running Lunch to give attention to both transient and mundane moments, understood through affect theory. I have already detailed the logistics of this time in section three of this chapter. I turn to the specific methods used to form and capture knowledge subsequently but here focus on how I approached the passing of time; how I approached the experiences of myself and other volunteers at Lunch.

An affective analysis conjoined with participatory methods places emphasis upon both the mundane and transient moments of experience at Lunch, seeing both as integral to the researcher and volunteers' time commitment. Amongst his seven injunctions for affect-based research, Dewsbury (2010b, 323) writes:

My beef here is with the “too often”; let this be a moment of “not always” to ensure that the spark of those “unthought” moments have as long a duration and affect as possible.

In establishing and running Lunch elements of the mundane have included tasks such as responding daily to emails, advertising for new volunteers, registering as a food business, food hygiene regulations, menu planning, and numerous other administrative activities. I use ‘mundane’ here not to belittle such activities, but to refer to their persistence and the amount of time required for administrative tasks that makes for monotonous reading in a diary, and yet are crucial for the project to run. These tasks became easier over time as I trialled different techniques and found my own best practice. In this way undertaking mundane tasks could also be considered a habit. Habit gives consideration of different perceptions of time by bringing together the past, present and a potential future (Dewsbury and Bissell, 2015). It is important to emphasise the mundane and habit in daily experience in order not to romanticise social action and working with volunteers because the experience is not always exciting, or ‘feel good’ in directly responding to need. To some degree, in contrast with habit, Dewsbury (2010b, 323) quoted above argues for an extension of the “not



always". I take fleeting moments in the research period as equally significant for analysis as the ongoing mundane because both impacted upon daily and ongoing experience (Dawney, 2013). This combination of thoughts reflects the openness of doing action research. Ahmed (2014, 13) refers to this in the context of will: "Research involves being open to being transformed by what we encounter." It is this openness and transformation through which I bring together the mundane and transient as an approach to knowledge within affect theory and action research. Throughout the establishment and running of Lunch, I endeavoured to be open to the unknown and unexpected. This will have implications particularly for the research analysis in recognising moments as snapshots of Lunch, and the transiency and change in experience both over time and for different volunteers. This is an opportune place to emphasise that establishing and running Lunch was not a consistently smooth process. By including my own narrative and diary extracts in the analysis, Chapters Six and Seven will add to the feel of doing the research; the role of my Christian faith; moments of tension, of enjoyment; the developing sense of team; action and in-action; and a learning curve throughout the process. My experience therefore changed over time, and hence the experience of running Lunch was a process rather than just an end-product of feeding children.

#### *4.3. Lunch Handover: Time Ongoing*

The project handover was crucial to Lunch's future viability. The handover and time afterwards for both myself as the researcher, and Lunch as a whole can be understood as a third period of time in the action research process. To maintain anonymity for Lunch, parts of the detail of this handover process are purposely cursory in places.

Approximately six months before the handover period it was decided by the church leadership that my handing over the role of running Lunch would amalgamated with another leadership role at the church. As a result, two paid workers were identified by the church leadership for me to handover the project to. Six months later, in September 2016, the formal handover meeting took place with myself and two new leaders, based around a booklet I prepared containing information, various account details, and summaries of how I had completed various roles. Through this I emphasised that changes could be made and templates/guidelines I had produced could be taken up, changed or disregarded as they wished.

After the project handover, I found a change in undertaking the research analysis because I became one step removed from the project and research participants, and through this felt more able to reflect critically about my own and others' experiences. These feelings were

reflected by Garthwaite (2016) in her participatory research with a foodbank in Stockton-On-Tees where she stopped volunteering at the foodbank before writing *Hunger Pains. Life inside foodbank Britain*. Yet, in an effort to take on the broader epistemology of action research and not just use it as a method (a critique by Wynne-Jones et al., 2015, of some applications), I continued to offer support and advice to the new Lunch leaders when asked. In the following months, I responded to their emails, text messages and phone calls asking questions over how various tasks could be carried out. I therefore offered ongoing support when wanted but made it clear that I would not volunteer in the immediate future at Lunch unless I was asked to; I felt it was important to give the new leaders space to make the project their own, and for other volunteers to see the new leadership rather than turn to me by default. It is significant to the ethics of the research that Lunch continues to run successfully after the handover and has won a community award.

Finally, action research and participatory geographies also recognise that the research process can give a longer lasting impression upon the researcher (Mason, 2015). As Katz (1994) acknowledges it can be difficult to make a clear distinction between participatory research and personal daily life. Indeed, action research can impact a person's life decisions and involve emotional engagement with issues (Mason, 2015). For instance, a person researching issues around food poverty may also make efforts to reduce food waste in their own food consumption - a change recognised by volunteers in interviews. Partaking in action research or autoethnography can therefore be heuristic for the researcher (Butz, 2010). Aside from the formal handover, the daily experience of the research has been extended beyond the formal research process because establishing and running Lunch has impacted my worldview and daily life. For example, time officially running Lunch and my personal church worship (not at the church Lunch runs in) have blurred in recruiting volunteers and sharing with others about the project. The research has hence had long lasting implications for both me, and for the church in which Lunch has been established and continues to run.

## 5. Forming and Capturing Knowledge

Action research denies a positivist or objective approach to knowledge, instead understanding knowledge as collective and formative (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012; Greenwood, 2015). From this, in an action research process, research participants should be directly involved in the process of developing research questions and the direction that the research will take, meaning knowledge is co-produced (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012; Brydon-Miller and Hilsen, 2016). This is where this research departs from an exacting

alignment to action research because only I as the researcher developed the research aim and questions. Furthermore, whilst the volunteers contributed towards the analysis through their diaries/interviews and ongoing reflections, I undertook the process of written analysis alone. Indeed, Lunch could have run independent of any research and although others engaged with the research questions at times, only I as the researcher fully bridged the research and action. However, the development of the research questions has been influenced by the experiences of myself and others – as recorded in solicited diaries – meaning research participants have influenced the research direction to some degree. Indeed, Stuttford and Coe (2009) acknowledge that whilst action research aims to facilitate learning for all participants in the research, in reality this is often not possible.

Why use affective geographies with participatory methodologies? In the context of ethnography, affect theory is fitting because both ethnography and non-representational theories endeavour to go beyond formal representation with a focus upon acting bodies, and affect theory provides a means to analyse sensory experience (Pink, 2013; 2015). For the context of participatory methodologies, it is pertinent that non-representational theories embrace experimentation (Dewsbury, 2010b). Following Chapter Two, both participatory research and non-representational theories make use of experience as an experiment as a means of building upon research as a formally unknown experience trial and (possible) failure, and a means of searching for gains in research whilst also accepting failure. Indeed, when experiment is embraced, failure is not seen as a methodological negativity but rather as a positive opportunity for change in the future. Brought together, experience and experiment are therefore notions that knowledge can be gained through because through both of these the body is changed (Dewsbury, 2010a; 2010b; McCormack, 2010).

However, affect theory can be difficult methodologically because it approaches that which is beyond the immediate experience of a stand-alone subject position: non-representational theories perceive subjects as relational (Bailey et al., 2008). This methodological problematic is generative of new research perspectives and one to be embraced. How then can I understand volunteers' diaries and interviews through affect theory? I acknowledge that in writing a diary, analysing others' diaries and in undertaking interviews, I have given my own interpretation of events and experiences (Katz, 1992). Political scientist Jane Bennett (2010, ix) explores how this could be a "performative self-contradiction" because it could be seen as contradictory to make claims beyond representation and then represent experience in writing. However, from Chapter Two I reiterate an understanding of non-representational theories as "more-than-representational theories" (Lorimer, 2005, 84). This puts the emphasis for the analysis on the meaning that experiences held for the Lunch

volunteers, understood and interpreted in the research through their diaries and interviews, rather than understanding their experiences as being impossible to represent. Therefore, embracing performances and experience are central to the research as I bridged researcher and participant, and immersed myself in volunteering with the result that I participated alongside the volunteers, and used this commonality as a starting point for analysis. This point builds upon Chapter Two where I argued that there is a difference between description and affective analysis. To take this further, affect theory is used in this research to explore and question how people started and persisted in volunteering at Lunch. So, if Lunch volunteers' experiences were taken only at face value and I focussed on the volunteering output – which in non-representational theories could be called the product (Dewsbury, 2010b) – then they were about responding to holiday hunger with play and food. How does this research's methodology and analysis go beyond the product of volunteering? Within the research analysis affect theory is a means to analyse how the meaning of Lunch experiences for the volunteer could be “more than” what was represented in the action, by virtue of people's faith linking their motivation and action to God. The forthcoming analysis is therefore not looking to only present these volunteering moments, but rather to take how these experiences can be understood to a different level in research that is closer to the meaning that the experiences hold for the volunteer as “more than” what is represented, and that recognises the ontological status of faith for faithful subjects. Moreover, in asking Lunch volunteers to keep diaries I have endeavoured not to undertake the research as an isolated individual, but rather to take into account others' affective experiences (Colebrook, 2014). It is therefore through my participatory relationality with other Lunch volunteers that I have analysed their narratives. I have hence taken what Marshall and Reason (2007, 369) call an “attitude of enquiry” in how I approach affective experience with curiosity, willingness and a desire to participate. I have not been able to explicitly include every volunteer's narrative in the written analysis. However, each narrative was included in the cyclical analysis process, and I was affected to some degree by each narrative meaning that whilst some are more explicit, they each have played a part.

Knowledge has been captured in three main ways: my own diary, solicited diaries of volunteers at Lunch, and interviews with volunteers. I use the notion of capturing knowledge to recognise that knowledge forms in an ongoing process. Indeed, action research understands research as a continual process of action and reflection (Cahill, 2009). This process is evidenced in the analysis to come through the breaking down of the analysis chapters into stages of volunteers' journeys: first, motivations and beginning to volunteer, and secondly, persisting in volunteering. Throughout Chapters Six and Seven, knowledge as a process is further emphasised by following volunteers' narratives (including my own) over

time and by recognising their changing knowledge and experiences at Lunch. This is particularly so for volunteers who wrote diaries over the whole research period because this allows the analysis to stress that their experiences, reactions, and understanding of food poverty and volunteering changed over time.

### *5.1. Diary Writing*

Solicited diaries are a research method which has been neglected and under-used both in human geography and the social sciences more broadly (Meth, 2003; Bijoux and Myers, 2006; Kenten, 2010; Morrison, 2012). As a method, this has been more common in health studies but there are clear advantages in expanding this approach into other disciplines (Morrison, 2012), as I will show for this research. Solicited diaries are distinct from unsolicited personal diaries because they are specifically requested by the researcher for research purposes (Meth, 2003; Morrison, 2012). They are a means, then, to make use of individual diary writing without raising the ethical conflict over using personal diaries in (published) research (Bijoux and Myers, 2006). Diary writing provides a means for ongoing reflection and when used in other studies, it has been found to increase participants' feelings of empowerment and participation in the research process (Bijoux and Myers, 2006). The method of solicited diaries therefore aligns well with the methodologies of action research and participatory geographies.

Once a person had agreed to volunteer at Lunch, I asked if they would participate in writing a diary for research purposes. At this point I gave volunteers a brief outline of the purpose of my research. I emphasised that participating by writing a diary was optional and not a condition for volunteering at Lunch, plus entries would be anonymised. Twenty-eight volunteers responded positively to this request for diaries, giving 110 diary entries in total (see appendix two for details). For both diaries and interviews, volunteers have been given pseudonyms. This is preferable to assigning numbers in following an action research epistemology of valuing people as individuals (Grant et al., 2008).

To some degree any knowledge once written in a diary is a fleeting moment because it may change by the next diary entry; it may be a moment of "not always" (Dewsbury, 2010b, 323). This fits within understanding knowledge formation as an ongoing process because a diary captures knowledge at one point in this process. It is therefore important that in the subsequent analysis chapters that volunteers' entries are framed within their ongoing narratives. Following this point, some diaries were written over only one school holiday period, but the longest diaries were kept across fifteen months, and the majority of volunteers wrote multiple diary entries across each holiday period. This longitudinal

approach to the diary writing is advantageous for allowing volunteers' stories to be told over time, and gave space for changing opinions and experiences (Meth, 2003; Morrison, 2012). The idea of fleeting moments alongside knowledge formation as a process is also important for understanding volunteering through affect theory, and in particular how people were affected by volunteering over time, as evidenced in their longitudinal diaries and reflections in interviews. In Chapters Six and Seven the research analysis will explore how affect theory shows us that it is the duration of a moment that gives it affective power, and so fleeting moments can be as significant as longer periods of time. This is particularly evident in the changes volunteers experienced from before volunteering and anxiety at the unknown (Chapter Six) to familiarity after volunteering (Chapter Seven). Writing my diary was the beginning of analysis in the action research process that emphasises a continual cycle of action and reflection, in contrast to what has traditionally been considered as two distinct stages of research with first, fieldwork and secondly, analysis (Cahill, 2009; Pink, 2015). Even in recording the mundane administration tasks undertaken, my own diary has been beneficial to centre the running of Lunch as a process of research (Greenwood, 2012). Following the aim of action research for a longer term process, I began my diary in the formative stage of research and wrote entries until after the formal research ended with the project handover (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012). Here elements of ethnography are also emphasised as the diaries gave the opportunity for my observations as well as participation.

Volunteers writing diaries and completing interviews were given an overview of the doctoral research, but in endeavouring to keep diary entries genuine rather than people writing what they thought I was looking for, I kept instructions brief: I asked for motivations, expectations and reflections on their experience at Lunch. This brief was hence intentionally kept broad in order to endeavour to limit the impact of my research agenda upon what volunteers wrote (Morrison, 2012). It is in this way that where volunteers wrote about the significance of faith as a motivation to act and persist in acting, that faith is emergent from their narratives: the research analysis does not presuppose that faith was significant, and acknowledges where faith was written or spoken about alongside other motivations and parts of experience. The option was given to write a diary and post it to me without a name to give total anonymity but no one chose this option. This was offered in order to encourage volunteers not to feel restrained in what they could write as they knew I would read the diaries and potentially meet them again as the project continued. However, it must be acknowledged that the diary entries will only even be a partial representation of reality as participants will consciously or unconsciously have made decisions on what to write about (Kenten, 2010; Morrison, 2012). In contrast to some other uses of this method, for example by Kenten (2010) and Morrison

(2012), I did not give participants a book to write in. Instead, I left how diaries were written open to individual choice. The majority were typed and emailed to me, whilst some were handwritten and posted. Often once a volunteer had agreed to write a diary, I often needed to remind them afterwards to send it to me. The diaries varied in length considerably, with the shortest being several lines, and the longest several A4 typed pages.

Reflecting the call in action research for a continuous cycle of action and reflection (Cahill, 2009), analysis was part of the ongoing research process, and began in my own diary writing. Points of analytical reflection were then made at the end of each school holiday as volunteers sent in their diaries for that period. The majority of the formal analysis, through a series of coding the main themes, then took place over the final summer holiday I ran the project, and afterwards once all of the diaries and interviews had been collated. Throughout the analysis, then, emphasis is put upon analysing volunteers' ongoing and transient experiences within the context of developing positionalities and narratives in order to avoid undue interpretations of individual moments.

## *5.2. Interviews*

The second method used to capture knowledge has been interviews with Lunch volunteers. Eighteen volunteers were interviewed, details of which are shown in appendix three. The majority of interviews were stand-alone whilst three built upon the volunteer already having kept a solicited diary. In total, when combined with diary writers, this has given forty-two research participants (out of seventy-eight volunteers at Lunch). For those who completed diaries and interviews this was advantageous to use interviews to follow up on points raised in a diary (Bijoux and Myers, 2006), whilst alternatively the interviews provided a means of research participation for those less comfortable with diary writing.

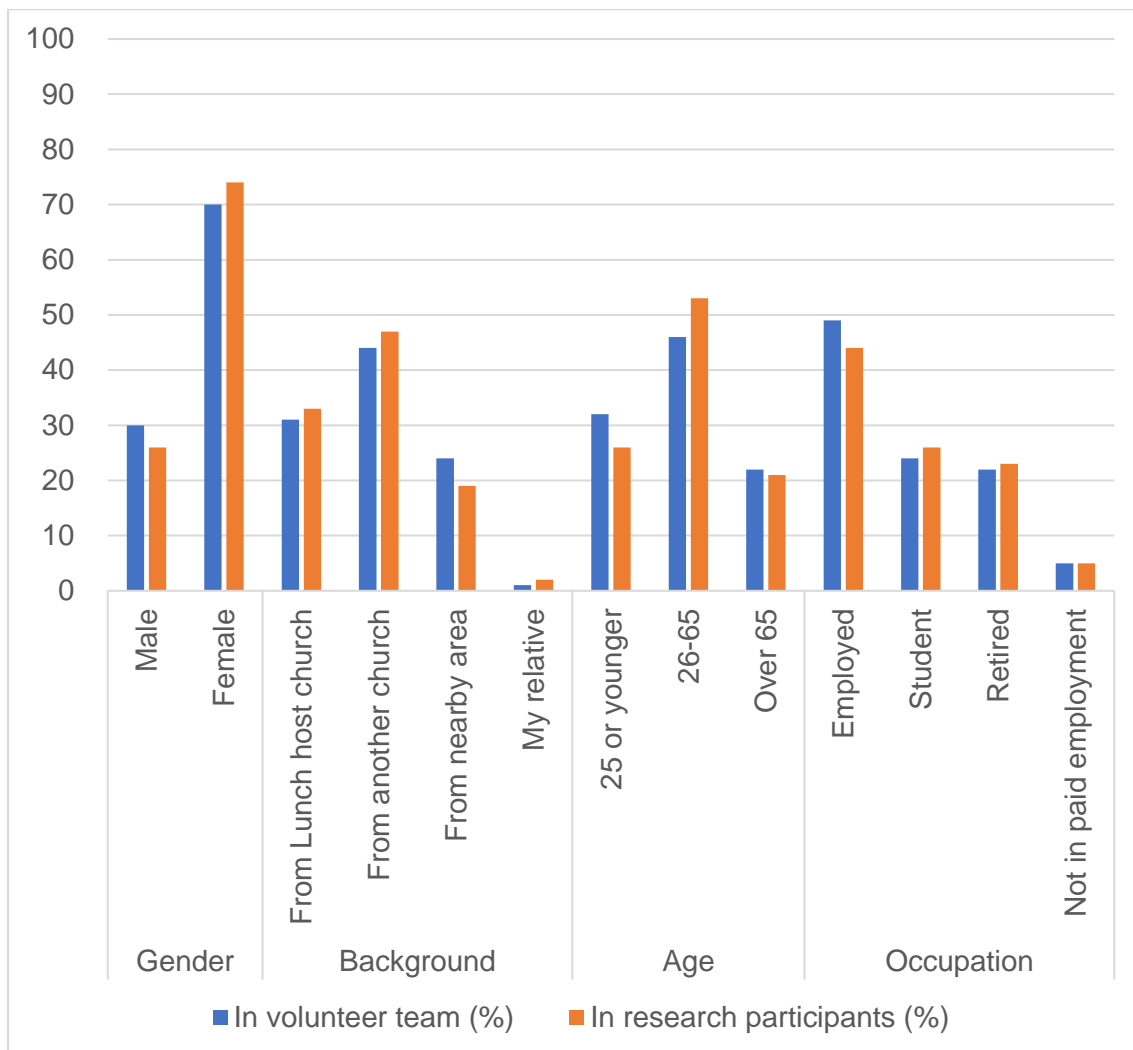
Interviews were semi-structured in the form of a conversation to give flexibility of topics covered (Longhurst, 2003; Pink, 2015). Two interviews took place with volunteers in pairs, and the remainder with volunteers individually. The basic questions that were adapted for different volunteers are shown in appendix four. Language was carefully chosen in wording the questions, recognising the playing out of power and authority in interview situations (McDowell, 2010). With the permission of the interviewee, interviews were recorded and then transcribed using a transcription key (Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Bird, 2005), an example of which is found in appendix five with an example transcription in appendix six. Interviews took place at Lunch or in a location of the interviewee's choosing, recognising that it is important that both the interviewer and interviewee are comfortable with the setting (K. Bennett, 2002), and averaged thirty minutes in length. The interviews were emphasised to

volunteers as being conversational – and were described to some as a request for a ‘chat for my PhD research’ to be less intimidating than a formal interview situation and encourage participation. This approach to interviews emphasises seeing the event as a social interaction that is influenced by both the interviewer and interviewee (Bell and Nutt, 2008). This therefore aims towards a participatory understanding of an interview rather than that of objective social science. Here, then, I acknowledge the role I played in the interview setting and potential influence upon what volunteers said; in the wording of the questions asked, the manner they were asked, and the degree to which tangents and conversation were encouraged. Whilst I endeavoured for a similar approach each time in the use of semi-structured questions, factors such as my relationship and familiarity with the volunteer being interviewed also played a role.

It is important to acknowledge that some volunteers chose not to write a diary and also turned down being interviewed (Miller and Bell, 2008). The experiences recorded in diaries and interviews are therefore not necessarily representative – and do not aim to be – of the totality of all of the volunteers’ experience at Lunch and I recognise that each volunteer’s experience was unique. However, the research participants did reflect the composition of the volunteer team overall. The volunteer team included people of different ages, backgrounds, occupations, and gender. Figure two below compares the composition/positionality of the overall volunteer team (seventy-eight people) and the research participants within this (forty-two people). This shows that whilst not all volunteers are represented, there is a strong reflection in the research participants of the overall composition of the volunteer team’s positionality. Therefore, generalisations of people’s experiences which will have been influenced by their positionality can be made with a degree of accuracy. This is also significant in aspiring towards action research’s idea of collective knowledge formation.



**Figure Two: A Graph Showing the Positionality of the Overall Volunteer Group and Research Participants**



In combination, the diaries and interview transcripts gave a wealth of records of a variety of experiences at Lunch from both me and other volunteers. Moving forward in the analysis these do not present a single narrative of volunteering at Lunch. People volunteered at different times, with varying commitment, and with different positionalities. Therefore, our narratives at different times could overlap, but could also be in contrast. This is significant for how narratives are interpreted – both by myself and others – and a point taken forward in the remaining chapters.

## **6. Researcher and Participants: Positionality and Power**

The third thematic concern that has arisen in combining action research, participatory geographies and ethnography in this research is positionality and power. These begin to portray the 'messiness' of the research process in that it was not always a straight-forward process, which is further shown in Chapters Six and Seven with the inclusion of my narrative alongside that of Lunch volunteers. Being aware of this in the ongoing methodology blurs methodological writing and the beginnings of analysis and reflection (Dick, 2015). Whilst there is an overlap between positionality and power, I take these in turn, beginning with positionality.

### *6.1. Positionality*

Traditionally across the social sciences positionality has been framed as a limiting factor that limits the researcher's ability to undertake ethnography or participate (Franks, 2015). However, through action research's epistemology I frame positionality as a dimension which the researcher can enact upon, ideally for positive change (Franks, 2015; Brydon-Miller and Hilsen, 2016). The role of the researcher is key in participatory research (Wynne-Jones et al., 2015), as is their having a willingness to learn rather than perceiving themselves as the expert extracting knowledge from participants (Garrett and Brickell, 2015). Crucial to this discussion of positionality is that my positionality changed over time and was not static throughout the research process (Valentine, 2002). I follow Katz (1992, 505) in framing the researcher as being in a position that is in-between:

...we must position ourselves on the borders between description and analysis;  
between here and there; between the present, past and future; between subject  
positions; between discourses; between us and them...

Such a position changes spatially and temporally. Therefore, whilst each of the components discussed relate to my positionality, at different times different characteristics were more significant and influential than others.

In research involving a topic such as deprivation, positionality necessitates a consideration of privilege. In this research, I have acknowledged my relative privilege as someone who has never experienced true hunger. However, rather than seeing this as an inability on my part to understand issues around hunger, I have used the opportunity to respond to people's hunger and enact positive social change. For example, I utilised grant writing skills to gain over £5,800 funding for Lunch. This is a significant amount for any social action project, particularly for a church in a deprived area, and allowed the project to be established with the funds to be sustainable and continue beyond the research timeline. My positionality

highlighting a position of relative privilege also brought to attention the need for research preparation. Pink (2015) argues that it is not possible to be completely prepared for ethnography before starting. This is an accurate assessment for this research process, however, a certain amount of research preparation was possible and it is important that in responding to food poverty, actions are context and situation appropriate. Through volunteering regularly at a foodbank before – and since – starting Lunch I developed an understanding of the multiple issues causing, surrounding and stemming from food poverty, and different ways of talking to people about a subject that can be difficult to broach. Framing privilege in this way through positionality gives a positive response to what Brydon-Miller (2004, 3) calls the “terrifying truth” of whether to act or not: fear of one’s own privilege can reduce a person to inaction. Whilst I recognised my privilege and through this a degree of power, inaction would have been a poorer option than acting and acknowledging that power and positionality exist because ultimately, without my action in establishing Lunch, it would not have occurred in this area and church at this time.

In combining action research, participatory and ethnographic methodologies, I have been both a researcher and research participant, and have had multiple identities that have changed over time; indeed the labels ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ do not adequately reflect the complexity of the situations in both research settings and communities more broadly (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). Valentine (2002) argues against ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ being used as binary terms. This begs the question asked by Franks (2015): who is a participant? In this research the participants are understood to be myself and the volunteers at Lunch who participated directly in the research process through diary writing or interviews; some volunteers have partaken only in Lunch project itself. Lunch could not have occurred without the children attending and their parents bringing them, without food suppliers, and without support from the employees at MakeLunch to name but a few. Are all of these actors research participants? To some degree, the response is ‘yes’, because they have all been a part of the researcher experience of establishing and running Lunch. However, they are not fully research participants because Lunch has been a standalone project as well as a research project. The aim of the project within its church setting was to respond to holiday hunger and deprivation rather than to undertake research. This does, however, raise questions around the ethics of participation in the research. I turn to this subsequently in relation to power.

A further, significant, element of my positionality has been as a Christian. As discussed in Chapter Two, religious positionality is important to acknowledge and act upon in faith-based research (Bailey et al., 2008). My faith positionality is framed through my being Anglican,

and more specifically within this, confirmed within the Church of England, a regular worshipper, and of a liberal tradition. This ‘type’ of faith was similar to the majority of volunteers at Lunch. Like myself, the majority of volunteers – there was one volunteer’s narrative as an exception – were therefore comfortable, and at times attracted by, that there was no religious content for the children at Lunch. Indeed, this may have deterred more Christians of an evangelical tradition from volunteering. In Chapter Six I will discuss the implications of this relative lack of faith diversity amongst volunteers for understanding faith as a motivation to volunteer. Here I explore our shared faith in terms of commonality, and how this enhanced how I could interpret others’ narratives.

Being Christian has allowed me to experience from “within” the role that faith plays in volunteering. I have therefore met Slater’s (2004) call for religious research by religious researchers, which Olson et al. (2013) repeated a decade later as still lacking in faith-based research. In doing so, I acknowledge that there can be limitations of researching one’s own faith, for example a difficulty in seeing the greater context and removing oneself from the direct situation (Henkel, 2011). However, I argue that this is outweighed by the benefit of analysing one’s own experience in-depth to gain understanding of faith (Bailey et al., 2008). In particular, my faith helped me to recognise and understand people’s narratives when they refer to faith as resulting in meaning that was “more than” what was represented, whereas this could have been missed had I not been familiar with faith language and faith connotations. One example is volunteer Violet’s writing in her summer 2015 diary:

Just doing things doesn’t change anything, there has to be some listening too and enabling people to change themselves. It wasn’t us who got [child] to try jacket potatoes, it was his friends, a bit like the man being lowered into the house for Jesus to heal.

My faith gives an immediate understanding that Violet is referring here to a Biblical miracle of the paralysed man and that this is significant for understanding her first sentence. Would Violet have written in this way if I had been atheist? This is not a question I have asked her, but from attending church together and coming from the same faith tradition, she would have known that I would ‘get’ this reference without her making it explicitly a Biblical citation. This is just one example of how my faith shaped how I was able to understand and interpret volunteers’ narratives, showing how through our shared faith I was more readily able to understand moments that had meaning beyond what was represented. How faith shaped interpretation stretched further than this because it also made a difference that we – volunteers and I – had shared experiences at Lunch together, and had been predominantly motivated to volunteer by our faith (whilst also recognising that people’s faith varies, and a

faith motivation operates alongside other factors). In Chapter Six I will explore how faith predominantly acted as a motivation for volunteers through Christian teaching on helping people in need, and through understanding their faith as influencing every aspect of their lives. I have a similar understanding of my own faith as a motivation to establish and run Lunch, and therefore our shared sense of motivation and experience at Lunch facilitated how I was able to interpret and write about my own and others' experiences in this research: being with people in an experience, and with a similar motivation gives a different starting point for analysis because the researcher starts with greater shared commonality with the participants and greater understanding of the nuances of that experience, than had they not also been there.

My faith not only shaped my interpretation of narratives, but also how Lunch itself unfolded. In terms of volunteering, through my faith I emphasised social action for its own sake without evangelism, and this shaped how I established and ran Lunch; making it open to all local children in the area, and putting emphasis on food and play. Had I had a different understanding of the implications of faith for social action then how I established Lunch could have been different, for example with Bible stories, or only for Christian children. Despite this overall commonality, the church where Lunch runs is not a church I attend myself for worship and in some ways I felt that I aroused suspicion from some church members in being both someone from outside the community and a researcher, and so it took time to develop genuine relationships. Volunteering regularly at the church youth group for six months before Lunch was launched and as it continued was significant in gaining some trust. However, in July 2015 when Lunch first started, there was still a lack of trust and wavering relationships between myself and some key church members. This only truly became more positive after running Lunch again in October half-term of 2015, by which time relationships and trust had developed and I had explicitly shown my genuine intentions for youth work at the church as a whole, and not just for Lunch. Relationships are not established instantaneously, meaning the time commitment towards the church was important. However, my sharing of the Christian faith with the group was significant in establishing a point of similarity between myself and the church community when in many respects I was an outsider, coming from a position of relative privilege. This is illustrated in my diary extract (09/03/2015) below from volunteering at the church youth group before establishing Lunch:

A lady I had not met before opened the door to me and I recognised her from the church website as [part of the church leadership]... She asked how I came to be there; "was I from church or secular?"

This extract illustrates how my shared faith helped to gain some trust in meeting new people. In this example it was important to the lady I had just met whether I was from a church or not. Had faith not been an element of my positionality, it is questionable as to whether the project would have been successful to the same degree with the church taking on the running of Lunch after I handed it over. Here logistical and interpretive implications of my positionality overlap because my narrative has been changed by my strong commitment to Lunch running each holiday, even in difficult circumstances. As the project co-ordinator and at every session I was arguably most committed to Lunch which will have heightened my response to events in my narrative because I was invested in the project continuing. However, it would be untrue to say other volunteers did not share a similar commitment, particularly over time and as we approached the project handover. A further point on commitment and positionality is that I differed to Lunch volunteers in that my doctoral thesis also depended on Lunch. However, relatively early on in running Lunch I felt that I had sufficient 'material' for a thesis, and so whatever next happened would change the narratives of the thesis analysis but not determine the success of my doctorate. To this extent my commitment to Lunch was more in terms of my faith and wanting the project to continue to respond to holiday hunger. Our – Lunch volunteers and my – differing and developing commitment to Lunch is therefore something that I recognise as part of our positionality to shape interpretation in Chapters Six and Seven.

## **6.2. Power**

Building upon researcher positionality, I now move to exploring power in the research practices. Power is a complex phenomenon that can seem inescapable for the researcher and research process (Kesby, 2007). Through my positionality I recognise the similarities and differences between myself and others at Lunch, all as volunteers and some also as research participants. This reflects different power positions and what Rose (1997) calls a contradiction in research: difference being unacceptable, and sameness being unacceptable. However, just as positionality is transient, so power is not static: the researcher can be both powerful and powerless at different times and in different spaces (Katz, 1994). The epistemology of action research overall aims to address unequal power relations (Grant et al., 2008). I explore power methodologically in two ways: within the volunteer group, and secondly in researcher/volunteer relationships. Finally, I turn to the overall ethics of participation in the research.

Lunch's volunteer team came from both within and beyond the area in which the church is situated: some from wealthy areas with relatively privileged backgrounds and others from within the community in which Lunch runs, where deprivation is in the top 5% of areas of

multiple deprivation nationally (DCLG, 2015). This presented a complex power dynamic. Not only did relationships within the group need to be established, but trust and mutual respect needed to be gained between people who had varied backgrounds and expectations, and towards myself. This reflects the emphasis in action research on the quality of relationships established in the research process (Stoecker and Brydon-Miller, 2012; Brydon-Miller and Hilsen, 2016). My diary (15/06/2015) below illustrates the difficulties experienced early on in establishing Lunch:

I felt like I could have walked away from the project as I am fed up with it and trying to work with people who I feel don't treat me fairly back.

Time was therefore important here in how our relationships developed (Grant et al., 2008), and in Chapter Seven I return to this extract in the context of persisting in volunteering. Power can be both elusive and layered (Katz, 1994; Brydon-Miller, 2004). I became more aware of the elusive nature of power relationships within the volunteer team after the first Lunch volunteer diaries were given to me at the end of the first summer holiday – the detail of which I turn to in Chapters Six and Seven. Such insights presented me with a privileged insight into volunteer's thoughts on Lunch which I would not necessarily have been aware of otherwise. This presented a challenge around the blurred distinction between myself as a researcher and participant: what degree should I discuss the contents of diaries with volunteers afterwards in the context of running Lunch? The power dynamics within the volunteer team blurred then with power dynamics between myself and volunteers as research participants. Participatory methods have been critiqued for reinstating power relations rather than challenging them (Franks, 2015). Was I too guilty of this critique both in terms of my relationship with volunteers and relationships between volunteers? Kesby et al. (2009) further explore this critique of participatory methods by explicating different understandings of power: whilst in disciplines such as poststructuralism, power is an effect, in a participatory approach power is both negative and positive, and power and domination are not synonymous. This is an important distinction. Endeavouring to use an action research and participatory approach for this research does not make it immune to questions and challenges of power. Indeed, an awareness of these challenges throughout the research process is the first step in addressing negative power instigations.

Framing discussions over power both within the volunteer team, and between volunteers and myself, is the idea of the ethics of participation. Clarifications are therefore needed here. First, after the initial formal university research ethics approval was granted, research ethics was considered as part of the ongoing research process (Miller and Bell, 2008), and discussed with the church leader at different stages of the research as questions arose.

Most often this was over questions of maintaining anonymity as different project publicity opportunities arose, including in the national media. Care was therefore taken to ensure anonymity for the area, church and people. Secondly, upon volunteering at Lunch all volunteers were informed about my dual role as project co-ordinator and researcher, and in knowing I was a university student, they were reminded of this throughout the project. It was then optional for volunteers to complete diaries or interviews and so formally participate in the research. However, my role as a gatekeeper for this should be acknowledged because although I reminded volunteers of requests for diaries, not all were approached to be interviewed. Generally I interviewed volunteers who had volunteered for more than one school holiday once I had established some degree of a relationship with them, and I encouraged all volunteers to write diaries. Thirdly, the parents/guardians of children attending Lunch were aware of the research in that first, it was referred to on the children's registration form (see appendix seven), and then in my asking for written consent to use photographs of their children in this research (see appendix eight). As this research focuses upon the volunteers' experience, parents/guardians and the children attending Lunch were not the focus of the research. Fourthly, it is significant for the ethics of participation that I gained funding for Lunch independently of the research process. When Lunch was handed over there was already funding in place for it to run for at least another two years. The project's sustainability was therefore taken seriously outside of the research aims.

Overall positionality and power have both been important and temporally variable dimensions of the research process. Each has highlighted questions over action and privilege, and who did and did not participate in the research process. Following a participatory approach to research, I embrace these questions as opportunities for action and reflection, rather than limitations in the position of the researcher.

## **7. Conclusions**

Through the research methodology the theory of action is met with the practising of action. Specifically, I have combined elements of action research, participatory geographies and ethnography, without falling exclusively under any of these methodologies. Working with a local church community, I established and ran a MakeLunch project responding to children's holiday hunger. This aligns with the aspirations of action research and participatory geographies for positive social change, co-producing knowledge, and questioning issues of power and positionality.



There were three main periods of time related to Lunch: the formative stage of exploring options and choosing to establish Lunch; the formal research period of establishing and running Lunch; and finally beyond the formal ‘fieldwork’ period. In each of these periods, affect theory and participatory methodologies work together to foster an analysis that engages with relational, transient, and mundane experiences. Just as through affect each experience is affected by the past and affects the future, in action research there is a cyclical research process in which action and reflection continually influence each other. This forms the basis for how knowledge was formed and captured in the research process. Lunch volunteers were not directly involved in the development of the research questions which would have been the ideal for action research, yet they are crucial to the research process because fundamentally, without volunteers the project could not have run. Building upon this, more than half of the seventy-eight volunteers completed interviews or solicited diaries, and I also kept a diary. Secondly, these interviews and diaries capture volunteers’ experiences at Lunch and will form the basis of the subsequent analysis chapters. How can I understand volunteers’ narratives, captured in diaries and interviews, through affect theory? It has been questioned if representing experience for analysis with non-representational theories is a performative contradiction. However, from Chapter Two I reiterate an understanding of non-representational theories as “more-than-representational theories” (Lorimer, 2005, 84) which puts the emphasis on the meaning of experience for the Lunch volunteers, rather than understanding their experiences as being impossible to represent. Therefore, by bridging across being a researcher and a participant, and immersing myself in the action alongside others, in an affect theory analysis I can move beyond the face-value product of volunteering (namely play and food) to ascertain the meaning that experiences at Lunch held for volunteers, and where at times by virtue of their faith this was “more than” what was represented in the action. The forthcoming analysis therefore looks not only to present these moments, but to understand the meaning that they held for the volunteers, and to make use of diary/interview extracts within volunteers’ ongoing narratives and positionalities.

Following this, I have argued that we should as researchers both challenge, and be challenged by, positionality and power in the research process. Positionality and power are key concerns in implementing action research and participatory geographies’ methodologies, and rather than being static, both positionality and power change over time. My positionality can be framed through relative privilege, coming from outside the local area, and having a shared Christian faith with the Lunch church and the majority of volunteers. In particular, this chapter has explored how my faith framed and facilitated both how Lunch ran, and how I am able to interpret other volunteers’ narratives. This is because I have a similar faith tradition

to the majority of volunteers, was similarly motivated by my faith to establish and run Lunch, and our shared commonality of faith language has facilitated by understanding of moments in their narratives that were about “more than” what was represented in their experiences. Like positionality, power has in the past been seen as a limiting factor in social science research. However, through action research I understand power as a changing process that can be embraced, ideally by all participants. Indeed, power impacted upon relationships between both myself and volunteers, and between volunteers themselves where diary and interview accounts showed that actual volunteering experiences were not always enthusiastic. I see this as reassuring in that volunteers felt able to share such accounts and did not simply write positively or what they thought I would want them to write about. This is not to brush away the challenges of power and positionality. Rather, if these challenges are actively embraced in the research process then they can become opportunities for lasting change and enhance the experience for both the researcher and volunteers.

Drawing this discussion together, as with any methodology there have been elements that were advantageous, and others that with hindsight could have been done differently. At the simplest level, the question of how to research volunteering has been approached through myself undertaking action with others. In this way action is met with action. This has been advantageous in allowing me to have shared experiences with Lunch volunteers with the result that when I analyse these experiences through affect theory, I am starting from a point of commonality and I can identify with their experiences differently than had I not also partaken in that action. This is not to privilege the researcher experience, however, partaking in action as opposed to only undertaking interviews with volunteers at a MakeLunch project elsewhere has given a greater level of shared understanding between myself and the volunteers, and myself and their experiences, than had I not also been at Lunch.

Building upon this, establishing and running Lunch affectively opened me to the mundane, transient and unexpected experiences that I could not otherwise have known could or would happen. Subsequently these experiences influenced the questions I asked to volunteers in interviews, and our shared experience will have influenced how they in turn responded. Hence, sensory experience that was created together and relationally enacted (and then understood through affect theory) provided a greater breadth and depth of experience than I would otherwise have been open to. That said, as with any piece of research, I do not know what volunteers did not share with me, and this remains a methodological uncertainty. It could be suggested that volunteers would hold back on sharing negative experiences with me because I was running Lunch, yet as previously highlighted, volunteers did share

positives and negatives, and so overall I believe our sharing of experiences was beneficial for the research process. Diaries were particularly advantageous for capturing volunteers' narratives because in contrast to a questionnaire, and to some extent an interview, people could write as much or as little as they wanted, and cover whatever they desired. However, it could have been beneficial to add focus groups as method used in order to foster more collaborative discussions of people's experiences at Lunch, and also to investigate whether people understood Lunch as having a particular affective atmosphere because this is not something that emerged from diary and interview narratives.

The participatory methodology was advantageous in that it meant research was combined with responding to holiday hunger in a local community. This advantage was further added to with support from running Lunch through a social franchise, my gaining funding for Lunch outside of the research remit, and the successful project handover. This extended the research ethics beyond only gains for the researcher and took the research into a deprived community to make a material difference in families' lives. This is important in developing collaborative partnerships between universities and communities, which this research went some way to do. However, with hindsight I would have made it even clearer to some members of the church leadership from the outset that I wanted to collaboratively work with them to establish Lunch because our relationship was at first plagued by unforeseen balances of power.

There are two further methodological reflections that I wish to emphasise in terms of who took part in the research. First, as I will take further in Chapter Six, the group of volunteers was relatively limited in terms of people's 'type' or tradition of faith. Had the group been more diverse in terms of faith, then how faith was performed could also have been different, for example with more evangelical or witness focussed performances. Secondly, there are a lack of narratives from people who stopped volunteering. This means that Chapter Seven focusses upon how people did persist in volunteering, rather than how people stopped volunteering. It therefore could have stretched the research findings even further had I followed up with more people who stopped volunteering to ask for their reflections on this.

The next chapters analyse different stages of the volunteering journey. Breaking down experiences in stages of a journey comes from our – my and volunteers' – narratives: first, volunteers' motivations and the start of their experience, and secondly, how a person reflects on and persists in volunteering.



## **Chapter Six: Faith as a Motivation to Act**

### **1. Introduction**

How can we understand our capacity and will to act? This chapter is concerned with the first of the three research questions. Geographical approaches to volunteering have emphasised patterns in people's volunteering; who, where and why people volunteer (Milligan, 2007). This research takes this further to *how* we volunteer. This chapter places us at the start of volunteers' journeys with the questions: how (and if) do people start performances of faith through volunteering at Lunch? What is their capacity and will to act at Lunch, in the context of this being a faith-based project where the majority of volunteers were Christian? These questions are necessary to respond to before I can move in the next chapter to the next stage of the volunteer's journey: how a volunteer persists in acting. Together these chapters explore faith and affect through each other, in order to question how we have the capacity and will to act, and persist in acting in faith-based volunteering. I pursue these questions through affect theory, and in doing so make use of the five insights that I concluded Chapter Four with for an affect theory approach to faith-based volunteering.

This chapter and the subsequent chapters therefore respond empirically to the understanding that this thesis is building: that faith-based volunteering takes people's performances of faith beyond worship spaces into people's daily lives, and by responding to UK food poverty, these performances reiterate the importance of faith in wider society. Hence this contextualises the research clearly within two key foci of the geography of religion; performances and the importance of faith in people's daily lives, and in wider society. If we are to truly understand faith-based social action then we need to understand how it takes place. As I explored in Chapter Five, an ideal means to do this is to match the theory of action with the practising of action. I am therefore concerned with how we can understand our capacity and will to act in the context of people volunteering at a faith-based MakeLunch project responding to children's holiday hunger. As I established in Chapter Three, by drawing on a variety of Christian thinkers I am understanding faith as the personal relationship between an individual and God (Augustine, 1953a; Lewis, 2012; Miles, 2012b; Sentamu, 2015b). In faith being personal, I recognise the variety of faith in how it motivates volunteers' performances. Faith is also about more than this relationship between the individual and God. This is because faith is "a way of experiencing life" (Miles, 2012b, xvi), and it therefore prioritises action. It is in this sense that I approach each person's faith as a performance, with faith-based volunteering being one means in which people can act out their faith in their daily lives. How this chapter focusses on faith as a significant motivation to

volunteer is emergent from volunteers' narratives. To reiterate from Chapter Five, I captured these narratives in diaries and interviews from general briefs to consider their motivations, expectations, and experiences at Lunch; I did not ask people to write about their faith. This analysis therefore does not assume the priority of faith as a motivation, and I explore faith alongside the other themes that emerged in volunteers' narratives: politics, effort, and enthusiasm.

In this chapter first I consider faith as an affect and motivator. If, as I developed in Chapter Three, faith is understood as referring to the personal relationship between an individual and God, and is acted out in people's daily lives, then faith can be understood as an affect because it impacts upon the body's capacity to act. More precisely then, I find that the body is affected by faith to be motivated to take part in faith-based social action. The body here is a human body; a Christian and volunteer. Clearly, these were specific bodies at Lunch who were affected in some way to volunteer, and other Christians and bodies were not affected to give the same end result of volunteering. How, then, did faith interact with other affects and bodies to mean that people did start volunteering? Was this a will to volunteer, a choice, or was the affect of faith one that leaves the body with a compulsion to volunteer? In responding to these questions I will understand how faith can operate as an affect in multiple ways, and that because faith is personal, people's performances of faith will also be personal and vary accordingly. That said, particularly strong narratives from Lunch volunteers to give attention to in this chapter were first, how faith affects bodies through Christian and Biblical teaching on helping others, which secondly, can interact with politics as a motivation to volunteer. This raises a question: to what degree are faith and politics active affects, and what is the role of ideas here? A further angle on faith and motivation that was significant in volunteers' narratives was that whilst their faith could motivate volunteering at Lunch, some volunteers understood their faith as affecting every action in their life. Faith is therefore a powerful motivator for acting, and specifically volunteering. This raises a question: how well through affect are we as researchers able to harness this power of faith for *continual* motivations to act? This reiterates people acting out their faith throughout their daily lives, rather than faith being one marker of identity that is applicable or not in different circumstances. However, performances of faith also vary spatially and temporally, are an assemblage of varying motivations, and take different forms for different bodies (Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009; Brace et al., 2011; Vincett et al., 2012; Holloway, 2013).

Faith does not operate in isolation from other affects. The second theme of this chapter considers how effort and enthusiasm also affect in varying ways for people to become active volunteers at Lunch. Effort as used here, reflects elements of will as the body strives

to act despite barriers to action, and enthusiasm is about a passion for action (Craggs et al., 2016). As with faith, effort and enthusiasm can be discerned as affects because they affect the body's power and capacity to act. They are distinct to faith, however, in that they come from within the body and how it is affected, rather than relating to God. To volunteer, initially a person needs to become aware of the volunteering opportunity and learn about what it entails. Without this there may be a general desire to volunteer, but not a process of affects leading to this specific volunteering opportunity and action being taken. This process of affects is significant, and builds upon the discussion in Chapter Four: an analysis of volunteering through affect emphasises that no action takes place in isolation from the past. Rather, people are affected by what has already happened in the past to contribute towards their present affective capacity – how they can act – and what they can do in the future (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3). How, then, do effort and enthusiasm react with past affects and affections, including a person's faith, so that they start volunteering at Lunch? Following from this, affective effort recognises that becoming a volunteer is not necessarily an easy option and so in order to volunteer people must overcome barriers to action. Fear of the unknown and anxiety at a new experience were key concerns that many volunteers experienced and would need to engage with and put in effort if they were to volunteer at Lunch. Here an affect of enthusiasm was a crucial balance to fear, and could carry a volunteer forward with an affect of faith to make the commitment to give their time to volunteer. This leads us to a person's affective capacity to volunteer: to what extent did people recognise their affective capacity as being suitable to volunteer? Volunteering was opt in, so a person needed to recognise their affective capacity to volunteer to the extent that they would take the step to actively put themselves forward to volunteer. However, what does it mean for a person to recognise their affective capacity? Significantly, as with faith, there is not one single narrative or answer to these questions because each person is affected differently. How can this be understood through will and affect theory, particularly in relation to active and passive affections? Recognising the role of both enthusiasm and effort is significant for how I approach performances of faith in people's daily lives in the geography of religion if I am to avoid idealised and sentimentalised analyses.

I conclude that faith is a significant affect which changed people's capacities and will to act by motivating them to volunteer at Lunch. Although faith is personal, volunteers were predominantly motivated by their faith to volunteer through Christian teaching on helping others and understanding faith as affecting their whole lives. In this way, volunteering as Lunch was a performance of their faith. However, as with any affect, faith does not operate in isolation. A motivation therefore does not necessarily result in action and there could be both faith-based action and in-action.

## 2. Faith as an Affect and Motivation

The majority, but not all, of the volunteers at Lunch were Christian. Emerging directly from volunteers' narratives, what I am concerned with here is how faith acted as an affect to motivate people to volunteer at Lunch, and how faith interacts with other aspects of people's lives and experiences (with affects and bodies) to be an affect resulting in action. Crucially, whilst faith can be understood as an affect, its operation will be distinct for each person because faith is personal. Therefore, whilst I focus on specific volunteer's narratives, this is not to universalise how faith is performed and affects. Adding to the contribution to the geography of religion, this is therefore not simply about how faith is performed in people's daily lives, but how it is performed in *multiple ways* in each *individual's daily life*.

First, I explore how faith is as an affect that motivates volunteer action. This can take a variety of forms but for Lunch volunteers predominantly built upon Biblical teaching both for a practical faith, and to help people in need. Secondly, this overlapped with the specific societal and political context that Lunch was running in. For some volunteers this combined with their faith to result in action. This emphasises how faith is not the only affect motivating action, and faith related to other parts of people's lives. Thirdly, it is notable that not all of the volunteers initially referred in interviews to faith as a motivation to volunteer. However, when questioned if faith played a role there was often surprise at being asked; of course faith motivating volunteering, because faith impacted upon their whole lives. This is where the significance of faith as motivation to act is emphasised, and this significance emerges from volunteers' narratives rather than being presumed in the research process. How well through affect theory am I able to harness this power of faith for *continual* motivations to act? These are vital preliminary questions for how to understand faith and affect through each other, plus draw these apart to understand the role of faith in volunteering, and how, through affect, the body comes to act.

### 2.1. Faith as a Motivation to Help People

Faith can motivate people to take part in social action in multiple ways. Affect is an ideal way to explore motivation because a motivation is a potential to change the body for future action. What people see as the end goal for their acting affects how faith motivates people to volunteer. For example, as I discussed in Chapter Three in relation to the politics of the distinction between faith and religion, an aim of evangelism gives a distinct motivation and approach to social action (Cloke et al., 2012). With an evangelist motivation, the motivation for social action is broadly understood as including an emphasis on converting people to



Christianity, although there has also been a move with evangelist theology to focus more on social justice for its own sake (Cloke et al., 2012).

In this context, Lunch ran in a Church of England church, and the majority of Christian volunteers were from this or other Church of England churches. Whilst the host church leaned towards evangelism in its worship style, theologically the church prioritised outreach and serving the local community to respond to need, rather than prioritising evangelism. Many of the volunteers from outside the host church came from less evangelical churches. Few of the volunteers at Lunch spoke of their motivation in terms of mission or evangelism; they did not understand acting out their faith – in this context at least – as converting people to Christianity.

Framing this discussion further, and in overlap with my own narrative of how I placed the mainstream typology of volunteers' faith, is Paul's reflection as a member of the host church leadership team:

...my experience was the churches that were better at helping other churches were always the evangelical churches and the kind of liberal Catholic were seemingly rubbish at that. And there's something about because the evangelicals are less laid back than the liberal Catholics they are more anxious about it, they're more anxious that they've got to go out there and save everyone, much less in the sense that "God will work his purposes out"... so it was pleasing to see that there was this response [volunteering at Lunch] from [two local liberal churches].

(Paul, interview, March 2015)

Indeed, several volunteers emphasised to me both in diaries and in passing conversation that it was important to them that the focus was on responding to holiday hunger, and not overtly or covertly giving the children Christian teaching as well as food. It was therefore significant to myself and many other volunteers that the food and play was offered openly to children: "as a form of 'no-strings' service and caritas rather than as a vehicle for evangelism." (Cloke, 2015, 2259). Cloke discusses this in relation to postsecularity which I first explored in Chapter Two; this form of social action, as found at Lunch, presents distinctive performances of faith where faith motivations are taken into public space, but in a way that emphasises service and provision for its own sake and in response to faith rather than for example, serving the growth of a church. Contrary to secularisation theses (as for example advocated by Bruce, 2002), this form of social action provides evidence that faith groups and faith-motivated volunteers are playing a tangible role in society, yet in a way that is not necessarily explicitly religious. Secular and religious spaces are therefore increasingly

blurred in social action. This is therefore a significant way that this research contributes to the geography of religion by emphasising the role of faith in wider society. Responding to food deprivation is not necessarily in itself a religious activity. That I made it clear to volunteers from the outset that there was no religious content for the children at Lunch may have deterred people from volunteering who were seeking to act out their faith as evangelism. However, some volunteers spoke of being challenged by the lack of religious content in terms of what it meant to act out their faith, with one member of the church leadership team reconciling herself to an understanding that “just because you’re not reading the Bible out to them it doesn’t mean you’re not doing God’s work”. Therefore, building upon the discussion in Chapter Three of what constitutes a faith-based organisation, despite the lack of religious content for children at Lunch, what makes the volunteering action faith-based is that Lunch ran in a church, and the majority of volunteers were motivated by their faith to volunteer (or if not then volunteers were asked to be sympathetic to the project’s Christian ethos). This further problematizes the categories of Sider and Unruh’s (2004) typology from Chapter Three; the volunteers did not have one uniform ‘type’ of faith, and building upon the work of Holloway (2011a) who understands space as emergent, in being a space that was constructed each day, Lunch was experienced and performed differently by different people. Had there been a greater mix of volunteers from different ‘types’ of churches then how faith affected, and therefore how faith was performed at Lunch, could have been more diverse.

If not through evangelism, how were volunteers motivated by their faith to volunteer? Most commonly, volunteers’ narratives referred to their faith as a motivation from their Christian belief that people should help others in need. This Christian belief primarily comes from Biblical teaching, particularly from the actions of Jesus. This mirrors how Cloke et al. (2007) found volunteers’ motivations to respond to homelessness in England were framed in terms of faith. What is different in this analysis is how I then understand this through affect theory, emphasising affect and affection, as explicated below. It is in this way that faith, belief and action are linked, and volunteers understood their volunteering as being performances of their faith:

[I] see it [volunteering at Lunch] as a way of serving and offering something to my neighbour... So it is a way to be living out what I believe.

(Amelia, interview, September 2016)

For Amelia, volunteering at Lunch was a practicing of her Christian belief, and therefore her Christian faith. Amelia understands that by “serving and offering something to my neighbour” she is putting her faith in practice, and through these actions she is performing

her faith. Her faith is hence more than an idea or reflection because it instigates her actions. Her capacity to act is therefore affected by what she believes, in that she wants to act out her faith and belief in God. I reiterate here from Chapter Three Miles' (2012b, xvi) understanding of faith as "a willingness to act". This is integral to how I understand faith as an affect and motivation because not only does faith impact upon the body's affective state, but it impacts upon what the body will do in the future and inspires future action. Faith goes beyond the human body in a person's relationship with God, but this relationship in turn inspires action and therefore impacts the body's affective capacity. Consequently faith is an affect which can increase the body's power to act. However, there is not one single way that faith operates as an affect, and had there been more volunteers from more diverse Christian traditions it is likely that this diversity would have been greater still.

Helping others could be presented as binary of 'us' and 'them'. However, the host church had a particular approach to mission<sup>3</sup>: being 'with' people, rather than 'doing' to them (for example see CUF, 2015; Denning and Buckingham, 2017). This is important because it shows the difference that faith can make to *how* people respond to food poverty. This research therefore shows us that faith is not only relevant to society through people being motivated to volunteer and respond to need, but relevant in how people interact with these, and ultimately how a faith-based project operates. I return to this theme in the next chapter through discussion of the persistence of volunteering; faith makes a difference to the relationships established between volunteers and the children.



I think for us it's working with the community as a Christian, it's about actually what are the needs of the people we are working with and how can we best support them because I guess that's how Jesus worked, it's working with everybody and how can I support this person best. And if that's food deprivation then that's what we'll work with. If it's play, lack of play facilities or after school projects or summer school, stuff in the summer then that's what we'll try and provide.

(Sarah, interview, September 2016)

Sarah's narrative shows one particular way in which faith acts as an affect and that being at Lunch is a performance of faith. By referring to "how Jesus worked" and wanting to emulate

<sup>3</sup> Mission in a Christian sense refers to acting out Christian faith and following the teachings of Jesus. Different churches will put a different emphasis on specific teachings and aspects.

that, Sarah is affected by the body of Jesus, whose action she had learnt about. In this way there is a layering of affects over time: Jesus once acting (as Christians believe), Jesus' action being recalled, and then Sarah wanting to act in the same way in the twenty-first century. These affects come together for how Sarah is affected to start volunteering. For Sarah, who was part of the church leadership, it was not so much wanting to respond to food poverty that motivated her, but rather responding to whatever need is found within her community. Whilst various types of ethos could lead to responding to need in a community, the point here is that Sarah identifies being Christian as motivating this response. Therefore, following the example of Jesus is a way that Sarah's faith motivates action, and the resulting action is a performance of her faith because it emulates the teachings of Jesus.

Consequently acting and being affected by faith is about a degree of relationality between Sarah and others in the community. Sarah's capacity to act is therefore framed by the need which she perceives in the community. This further emphasises the difference that faith makes to society in how need is responded to. Furthermore, in emphasising the relationality between people, such as between Sarah and the local community, affect theory gives us a different means of analysis from understanding volunteering through an ethos framing. To illustrate this further: Barnett et al. (2005, 30) explore how "moral selving" is about a person helping others with the end goal of improving their own virtuosity. Affect theory questions whether Sarah was acting for her moral self because she emphasises wanting to affect (help) others in terms of their affective capacity (need), rather than herself.

Biblical teaching on helping people in need, and faith instilling action, were key affects which I recognised as potential motivators for action, and thus endeavoured to employ in recruiting volunteers. However, I also felt caution in doing this, as shown below in my diary after I gave a talk in a service at the church where I worship. My talk outlined the issue of holiday hunger, and from this encouraged people to volunteer at the project which I was establishing. Throughout this analysis my narrative operates at times alongside, and at others contrary to, other volunteers' narratives. Here it overlaps with Jack's narrative, Jack first as a priest and then as a Lunch volunteer.

When I finished with "thank you" I started walking back to my seat expecting there to be silence, as would be usual after a sermon/talk. However, one elderly lady started clapping as I walked past which others picked up on. I felt so relieved at this, that what I said had been well received... Jack then added his own thoughts with a [Biblical] passage from James 2:14-17 [below] on putting faith into practice, as otherwise what was faith?

*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”*

I was glad he added this as I had not for fear of sounding too accusing... I had not wanted to risk being “holier than thou”.

(My diary, May 2015)

There is a clear potential affect from the Biblical passage that Jack quoted to motivate a Christian body to act. The Bible here is a non-human affective body that is an expression of ideas of Christian faith and teaching. This is a powerful expression of ideas because of the authority that Biblical text is given at the church<sup>4</sup>; people’s faith changes the significance of the text in terms of the authority given to it. To take this further, particular Biblical passages, such as what Jack quoted, can take on a particular affective power to instigate action because of their common association with social action movements. The idea from the Biblical passage is therefore powerful in how it can affect. For example, Matthew 25:35-36 on responding to hunger is commonly used within faith-based charities mission statements such as for the Trussell Trust, not only to portray their response to hunger, but also to instil a duty for other Christians to work with them. It is therefore possible in recruiting volunteers for faith-based social action to make use of Biblical passages to engage people and foster a desire to act. These Biblical passages can therefore become ‘tag lines’ that people are continually affected by in their motivation to volunteer, thereby linking a faith motivation from a Biblical text to the acting out of faith – performing faith – in a particular volunteering activity. This could have been understood through an institutional and organisational framing, such as in the work of Conradson (2003) on organisational space at a New Zealand community drop-in centre. However, affect theory takes us beyond the organisational framing of volunteer recruitment to the interactions and responses to a potential ‘tag line’. In this situation, whilst I recognised the potential of quoting the Bible for recruiting volunteers, I had not made such a Biblical message explicit in my talk because “I had not wanted to risk being ‘holier than thou’”. Therefore, whilst I recognised that Biblical teaching and acting out faith were strong potential affects upon Christians in the church congregation, I was concerned how these Christian bodies would be affected; how the affect would be received. Being considered “holier than thou” could be problematic if interpreted by people as meaning

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<sup>4</sup> Church is used here to refer to this particular church I was worshipping at, whilst recognising that across Christian denominations there is varying emphasis placed on the authority of the Bible, for example in relation to tradition.

that I believed my Christian faith was more authentic than theirs, which could discourage them from volunteering with me at Lunch. My capacity to act was therefore affected by my concern over how I would come across to others in the congregation, and my fear of seeming “holier than thou”. The mechanics of affect theory are crucial here: I could talk and produce an affect, but I did not have control over how bodies would be affected because this depended on the receiving body’s affective capacity. Yet Jack’s position in the church was more senior and being one step removed from Lunch, he did feel able to quote the Bible and induce an affect. Being “holier than thou” was perhaps less of a risk for Jack because his positionality, and particularly his position in the church as a priest, framed how he could affect people compared to myself. I could say, then, that there is a difference between how I perceived my affective capacity as a member of the congregation, to how Jack perceived his as a priest taking the service. Ergo, Jack had the authority to preach, whilst I was more hesitant.

My concerns over how I would affect others were then alleviated when the clapping started, being affectively passed down the rows of pews as a lady at the front started clapping. Throughout this event, it would have been different had I not had a shared Christian positionality with the congregation: I was not a stranger talking, but Stephanie who wanted to act through faith, and was asking for others to share in this. This is not to say that a shared positionality is superior, but rather in Spinozian (1996, IIP38; IIP39) language that it increased the degree of common notions – compatibility – between bodies, and therefore made the congregation more open to joyous affects and taking up the action of volunteering. This compatibility between bodies was important because action is not necessarily an easy option: after Jack’s contribution to my talk I asked if he would volunteer, and he reflected on this in his diary later that summer:

I can talk and think. Commitment to *doing* I find harder and not easy or natural.  
But the moment came when I thought it's just not enough to talk. Time to go. And *do*.  
(Jack, emphasis in original, diary, August 2015)

Jack had already shown – and preached – the Biblical justification and the importance of action to faith, but found action difficult. However, having been cumulatively affected by my talk, Biblical teaching, and his faith, his affective capacity was extended to such a degree that he felt able and a degree of urgency or commitment to take on a new action: that of volunteering at Lunch. Jack was therefore motivated by his personal faith to volunteer, and from this, volunteering was a performance of his faith. This adds empirically to the theoretical discussion in Chapter Four that how action takes place through affect is a combination of past affects and will. To some degree this could be understood as a

conscious decision on the part of Jack, but I must also recognise the cumulative effect of Jack being a Christian for decades, my sharing with Jack about Lunch, and Jack reading then sharing the Biblical passage on Christian faith requiring action. Therefore, there are prior causes and affects through which Jack had the capacity to act and came to volunteer, rather than simply him making a decision or acting through will. Jack's capacity to be affected was hence significant in his motivation to volunteer: his past experiences and hence how he had been previously been affected impacted upon his affective capacity and led towards him starting to volunteer at Lunch.

## 2.2. Faith and Politics

Reiterating from Chapter Two that a key tenet of non-representational theories is that both affects and bodies affects are relational by their very nature (B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a), it is not possible for any affect to operate in isolation from others. Therefore, whilst volunteers' narratives emphasised the significance of faith in motivating volunteering at Lunch, it was not the only motivation, and faith is in relation to other affects. The thematic analysis of volunteers' narratives highlighted that a political motivation overlapped for many volunteers with their Christian faith. This is one way in which faith operates as an affect in multiple assemblages. One such volunteer for whom faith and politics are layered – and that their affects are relational – is Violet, a middle-aged Christian from a relatively wealthy church who volunteered as a cook and wrote a diary every holiday that Lunch ran. In her first diary entry she reflected on her motivations to volunteer:

Why Make Lunch? Apart from the fact that I love cooking, for me it's both theological and political. The theological aspect is to do with the hospitality of Jesus – food is such a big part of the gospels, Jesus is always feeding people and including everyone around the table, so the chance to live this out in a similar way to Sara Miles' *Take This Bread* was really compelling. Making food for kids who normally get free school meals feels exactly the sort of thing Jesus (or at least Martha) would have been doing. In food we share our fundamental dependency on the earth and on each other so it's hugely relational, too, and for me this speaks of God in relation in the Trinity and with us in the incarnation. The political motivation comes from my absolute horror at the outcome of the recent [2015] General Election and the implications of the benefits cuts, as well as the lack of compassion people seem to be showing to anyone they perceive as different to themselves. My reaction to the result was to want to get involved in direct action, partly because it's needed on a practical level, and partly to equip me to argue against the prevailing right wing mythologies: **stories** about real people's lives are so much more powerful than

statistics in talking to people who are (let's be generous) probably basically well meaning, but ill-informed by the right wing media. It's so easy to live in a middle class bubble, and I felt I was guilty of being far too passive in my political engagement.

(Violet, emphasis in original, diary, July 2015)

Although she uses the word “theology” rather than faith or religion, Violet’s diary entry builds upon understanding faith as an affect that meant that she wanted to mirror the teachings and action of Jesus. Faith is therefore expressed in two ways in this extract. First, Violet’s faith is expressed in her relationship with Jesus, and understanding Jesus as a role model. Secondly, Violet writes about “the hospitality of Jesus” and how “the chance to live this out... was really compelling”. Here her faith is expressed in the action itself of volunteering at Lunch; wrapped in the faith motivation of aspiring to be like Jesus, volunteering is a performance of her faith. One thing that this does is to emphasise the power of God in the faith relationship, and therefore the power of God through faith as an affect. This is because Violet wants to act in a way that was similar to Jesus (God). This builds upon the discussion of Chapter Four in terms of the power of God in relation to human will because the significance that Violet attaches to Jesus’ actions places God with an increased affective capacity to affect her own action. In relation to this, Violet compares what she hopes to undertake as a volunteer to that of Miles’ work which I explored in Chapter Three. There is therefore an affection from Violet having read Miles’ *Take this bread* which increases Violet’s affective capacity because she wants to act in the same way.

The interaction between faith (or theology) and politics for Violet also extends beyond volunteering as an action in itself. This volunteering holds more meaning to Violet than what is represented in her cooking meals at Lunch. Taking the output of her faith motivated performance into wider society, she hopes to be able to challenge “prevailing right wing mythologies”. Building upon the discussion in Chapter Three, these motivations to act can be framed in direct contrast to a rights-based approach to food poverty (Dowler and O'Connor, 2012; Lambie-Mumford, 2017). This is because rather than understanding volunteering and giving food as being complicit with welfare cuts and the government, Violet understands her acting as increasing her capacity to challenge others’ (mis)conceptions about food poverty, and consequently to take part in activism (Buckingham and Jolley, 2015). Clearly, how Violet is affected by the General Election relates to her positionality; as I explored in Chapter Five, our continually developing positionality frames our view of the world (Valentine, 2002). Both faith and politics are therefore powerful affects that motivate Violet’s action. Whilst faith and politics are each more than an idea, the ideas that come from them are significant in how Violet is motivated and affected for future volunteering



action. It is volunteering at Lunch, then, that can turn Violet's faith and political motivations into action. Her faith therefore interacted with her political ideas and the UK political landscape to result in a specific performance of her faith.

To give greater context to Violet's writing, I first recruited volunteers at the time of the 2015 General Election when the Conservative Party came to power as a single governing party. I can add to how to understand Violet's capacity and will to act in this extract by building upon Chapter Four on Spinoza's active and passive affections, and common notions. For people who did not vote for the Conservative Party (Violet later writes she is "politically on the left"), this political situation – in terms of the election result – could be understood as an affect of which they were not the whole cause. The interacting bodies of Violet and the election result are not compatible or in common (Spinoza, 1996, IIP39), and therefore the relationship or affection from the election to Violet is passive (IIP39pr; IIdf2). However, I understood in Chapter Four that for Spinoza, a passive affection decreases the body's power to act (Deleuze, 1990; Spinoza, 1996, IIP11s), and a common notion is about the compatibility between bodies (IIP38, IIP39). In this instance, it is not necessarily so that the election decreased power to act through its incompatibility with potential volunteers because Violet and others at Lunch were motivated to volunteer in response to the UK political situation, welfare cuts and the 2015 General Election result. Consequently I could understand politics, if not as an affect which actively affected bodies (because the bodies were not the cause (IIP39pr) and were not in common), then at least as an affect which increased bodies' affective capacity. I can interpret this as an increase in affective capacity in terms of people's motivation to volunteer to respond to food poverty when it interacted with other affections already existing in that moment in the body's affective state, for example a faith motivation to help people in need. Is this possible within Spinoza's (1996) conception of affect as presented in *Ethics*? Perhaps not in the strictest sense of active and passive affections when these are interpreted through causality and compatibility between bodies as in Spinoza's *Ethics*. However, the election result is not one single event which intruded upon the body. Rather, it is something that continues to momentarily affect bodies in their affective capacity, in their relationality, and therefore affect their capacity and will to act. This is because they are affected and affect not just each other, but also their environments, including political contexts and events. This means that what I can take forward from this is the cumulative effect of multiple affects; faith, politics, and responding to people in need. This takes us beyond an institutional framing of volunteering: Violet did not understand her participation as within or beneath the state (for example as part of the shadow state, see Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a; Milligan and Fyfe, 2004), but as an acting out of her faith and challenging of both local and national politics.

In this way, thinking affect and faith through each other allows us not only to appreciate the role of faith and the difference that faith makes in social action, but also how, through affect, the body comes to act – giving an insight into faith, and into affect theory itself. Faith, politics, giving practical help, and wanting to challenge how people understand food poverty are all affects which motivated Violet to act as a volunteer, and increased her affective capacity to want to act. Each are affects which culminated in Violet volunteering, but in turn were each affected and changed by each other; this culmination is not fixed or linear. Having been a life-long Christian and volunteered in the past, it is likely that Violet already held a general desire to volunteer. Accordingly motivation takes into account a person's background disposition and positionality. However, these affects, which contributed to Violet's affective capacity, came together in combination with the advertisement for volunteers at Lunch to mean that Violet took practical action and began volunteering. I can question here the degree of will in Violet beginning to act. Does her awareness of these different affects mean that she exceeded what Spinoza (1996, VP45D) calls the imagining of will by becoming aware of the prior causes under which she is acting? Does this mean she moves beyond Spinoza's first form of knowledge to reason, the third form of knowledge (IIP40S)? Without knowing Violet's every thought this is difficult to answer, however, she is clearly aware of the affect of faith and politics, and in the next chapter I will return to Violet's experiences over fourteenth months volunteering at Lunch to ascertain how she reflects on the experience, is affected for future action, and understands her faith as being impacted.

### *2.3. Faith Impacting upon Whole Life*

Care must always be taken in research that questions are not asked to participants which automatically give a response which the researcher is seeking. Not all of the volunteers interviewed initially mentioned faith as a motivation for volunteering at Lunch, but when (knowing they were Christian) I asked if their faith had played a role then they often expressed surprise that this was even questioned because to themselves it was obviously a motivation. Perhaps their knowledge of the shared Christian positionality between themselves and myself, as discussed in Chapter Five, meant that they assumed I would realise the importance of Christian faith in motivating social action. Or perhaps the dominant Christian tradition amongst volunteers – and lack of explicit evangelism – influenced the likelihood of this being mentioned. Reflecting that faith does not have one single operation as an affect, these volunteers understood their faith of a significance that meant that it impacted upon everything that they did; an affect that is always impacting upon their affective capacity and affecting their subsequent actions. Indeed, because of its "more-than-representational" (Lorimer, 2005, 84) nature, affect theory is an ideal means of analysis for the influence of faith upon acting, when that influence was not always verbalised.

*Stephanie:* Would you say your Christian faith influenced your wanting to help [at Lunch], or...?

*Mark:* Yeah ((pause)) in as much as it influences every decision, not in a: “I have to stop and check everything against my faith”, my faith informs my life at a more fundamental level anyway.

(Mark, interview, July 2016)

This extract is crucial for how to understand performances of faith as a Lunch volunteer. In our interview, Mark did not initially mention his faith as a motivation to volunteer at Lunch. When directly questioned on this, Mark responded that his faith informs his life “at a more fundamental level anyway”. In this way, Mark is an example of the volunteers at Lunch who understood multiple actions, if not their whole lives, as performances of their faith. If faith informing life is understood as an affect, then there is something here about the level at which this affect is operating which is significant. This is because Mark does not understand his faith as something that he must consciously check each action and decision against, but rather that his faith operates at a deeper level to influence each action “anyway”. Mark expanded that he was motivated to help because he was often involved in youth work at the church and wanted to be involved in a project aimed at helping the wider community. In this way faith is not something that is performed as one distinct part of a person’s life. Rather, these volunteers understood their whole lives as being performances of their faith. Therefore, whilst this research explores the varying roles of faith as a motivation to volunteer to respond to holiday hunger, it emphasises for the geography of religion how performances of faith can be understood as faith as an ongoing affect throughout a person’s daily life. This is necessary to emphasise to comprehend the power of faith as a motivation for any action. Faith is therefore more than a marker of identity (Holloway and Valins, 2002; Brace et al., 2006), because through faith people can act across different spaces which may or may not be traditionally considered sacred or secular (Sutherland, 2017). In affect theory language, Mark’s understanding of faith is that he is affected by his faith to such a degree that every action his body then undertakes is affected by faith. Hence, faith does not affect Mark in one single way, and in affecting every aspect of his life it also interacts with all of these aspects; faith is alongside other affects. However, the significance that Mark places upon faith makes it distinct from other affects. Therefore, whilst the body is continually being affected and entering into different relationships, faith to volunteers such as Mark was an ongoing affect which was always present, and always impacting upon their affective capacity in each passing moment. Affect theory therefore gives a distinct insight into volunteering compared to other approaches to volunteering. This is because affect theory allows us to understand

and emphasise the power of faith to continually motivate a volunteer to act. In turn other approaches, for example an ethos or identity approach (for example Einolf, 2011; Forbes and Zampelli, 2014), recognise faith as one part of people's motivations to volunteer, but less so the ongoing role and the power of faith in motivating action in all aspects of a person's life.

The experiences of Lunch volunteers therefore mirror the findings of Vincett et al. (2012, 282), as discussed in Chapter Two, that it is significant to Christians to act out their faith every day of the week, rather than being "Sunday Christians" where religiosity is performed one day of the week. There were different ways in which people understood this, and how consciously they felt their decision making was in relation to their faith. Some volunteers, such as Sophia, understood the influence of faith as something which could be consciously discerned for each action.

How can I put it? I think the primary thing is to love God. And when you love God things kind of cross your path that are part of God's plan... I think if you do it and if you feel uncomfortable about it, and it feels wrong, and it's not right then you're in the wrong place with the wrong people doing the wrong thing. And if it's a blast then you're in the right place, with the right people, doing the right thing ((laughs)) does that make sense?

(Sophia, interview, September 2016)

Sophia does not use the word "faith", rather talking in terms of love to and from God, which following the discussion in Chapter Three can be understood as her personal interpretation of faith. From loving God, Sophia is actively affected in that new opportunities can be engaged with, and each time her body's power to act is increased as she endeavours to ascertain "God's plan". Her endeavouring to act in this way is therefore an expression, or performance, of her faith. One point that this raises in terms of Sophia's capacity and will to act is the power of God to affect Sophia, and how she wants to match her action to what she believes God wants. The balance of powers to affect are therefore not equal in the faith relationship between Sophia and God; God is hugely more powerful than Sophia. Building upon the discussion of Violet, faith and politics, her endeavouring to act out "God's plan" could be understood as a passive affection because God is the cause of the action, not Sophia. There are therefore difficulties in how to understand, through affect, a person of Christian faith being caused to act in a way through their belief in God (a passive affection which reiterating from Chapter Four means that God, not they are the cause of), yet their capacity to act is increased (an active affection). Sophia's reasoning for how she ascertains if what she is doing is the "right thing" or the "wrong thing" can more easily be understood

through affect, specifically the notion of compatibility which Deleuze (1997) takes forward from Spinoza. Sophia perceives that she can understand if she is doing the “right thing” – which by implication from her reasoning is therefore part of God’s plan – if there is compatibility between bodies in that action; there are joyous affects exchanged, and vice versa for the “wrong thing” (Hardt, 1993). Sophia’s account raises complex theological questions – such as how she can enter into God’s plan, or be doing the “wrong thing” – which are beyond the remit of this research. What I take forward from this, building upon Chapter Four, is how Sophia is affected by her Christian faith in what action she seeks to undertake, therefore combining elements of received affection and will; there is not total freedom or will because of these received affections, but Sophia presents an element of choice in how she engages with these affections and the impact they make in varying ways upon her affective capacity, and therefore her capacity to act. Sophia’s narrative also begs the question of whether an understanding of God as an active presence in people’s lives, for example through the Holy Spirit, and as a becoming force can be reconciled with an understanding of faith and action through affect theory. Remembering from Chapter Four that God for Spinoza (1996) is an infinite substance (Idef6) that necessarily exists (IP11; IP11D) and is the cause of all bodies and their affections (VP14; VP22D) – therefore, the relationship for Spinoza between humans and God is not active on the part of God because God cannot be affected (VP19; VP19D). If Spinoza’s conception of God is followed strictly then there are therefore limitations in the extent to which one can understand there being an active relationship between God and humans because God cannot be affected by the relationship. However, this does not detract from the benefits of an affect theory approach to understanding faith-motivated volunteering. This is because faith – the relationship between God and humans – can still be understood as actively affecting humans in their capacity to act, with volunteering being just one of many actions which are affected by faith. Faith here is not passive; it is about an active set of relationships that the body engages with, and in turn affects the body’s power to act. Sophia’s motivation to act in the future is therefore affected by the past, as she seeks these positive affections again.

Overall, faith can be understood in terms of multiple affects that motivated people to volunteer at Lunch. Such action contributes to the key themes identified in Chapter Two for the geography of religion; of how to understand performances of faith in people’s daily lives beyond worship spaces, and how faith-based organisations are functioning in society. It is in this way that an analysis through affect theory has gone beyond understanding faith and volunteering as a part of person’s identity. Faith is not a single affect. For Spinoza (1996, IIPXIIILIIIA1), different bodies can be affected by the same affect differently. For this reason I have analysed individual narratives together, rather than presenting one collective

narrative. How well is affect able to harness this power of faith and the ideas that come from faith? There are limitations in affect theory in how the faith relationship between humans and God can be understood as being reciprocal. However, affect is hugely advantageous for how to understand the impact of faith upon the human body and its future action. This is because affect theory emphasises that faith is not an isolated or one-off affect, and that faith as an affect does not operate – and motivate – in isolation from other affects. Rather, faith continually affects the body, and the body is continually changing and entering into new relationalities. Faith therefore does not operate in isolation from other affects, both in the past, present and future in how the body is affected. In this way for many volunteers, their faith performances cannot be separated from their whole life. This is important to recognise in placing the acting body in each moment within the prior causes influencing each action that it undertakes, of which faith is just one, although for many Lunch volunteers faith was a particularly significant affect that could affect every aspect of their lives.

### **3. Affective Effort and Enthusiasm**

Faith was a significant affect that motivated volunteers to act at Lunch. However, a motivation does not necessarily result in action. In this instance, for these volunteers, faith interacted as an affect with other affects to result in a person putting themselves forward to volunteer. From volunteers' diaries two key themes are significant in combination with faith in this starting to volunteer: effort and enthusiasm. Other factors will also have influenced a person starting to volunteer, but effort and enthusiasm were central in volunteers' narratives in relation to faith and a person's capacity to will and act.

I consider effort and enthusiasm as affects because they affected people's capacity to volunteer. First, effort here is about the body striving to act despite barriers to action. I explore how volunteers grappled with a fear of the unknown before they started volunteering. Consideration of effort recognises that starting to volunteer was not necessarily easy. Effort extends to people's perceptions before starting to volunteer of what other volunteers would be like, and how they in turn would be perceived. Volunteers would have to embrace these concerns to some degree – put in effort – to then start volunteering. This takes us beyond anxiety to the effort required to start new relationships for people to volunteer together. From effort follows a question around people's affective capacity: to what degree did people recognise their affective capacity for being suitable to volunteer at Lunch? These questions are significant for how in the geography of religion to understand performances of faith if research is also to avoid romanticising such performances, and cast them in an idealised manner.

Secondly, enthusiasm is understood here as a passion for action (Craggs et al., 2016). Enthusiasm acts as a balance for effort and help to increase a volunteer's affective capacity to tip a faith motivation for action into action itself. Volunteers were each uniquely affected by effort and enthusiasm in different ways and at different times as they were affected by the past and present, and ultimately began volunteering. There will have been others for whom the motivation was there, but their capacity to act did not reach far enough to start volunteering or the effort proved too much of a barrier to action – these people remain an unknown entity in this research. To reiterate, consideration of effort and enthusiasm is not to present a single narrative: each volunteer was motivated to volunteer distinctly, within and beyond these themes.

### 3.1. *Effort to Start Volunteering*

Lunch first opened in July 2015. Prior to this point, for the first volunteers (including myself) how the experience of volunteering would be was an unknown entity. Fear of the unknown and associated anxiety were common themes in volunteers' diary entries, both beforehand and when they first started volunteering. However, for some volunteers I did not realise this until I read their diaries; they did not show their anxiety to me until writing a diary and so in this respect our narratives at first were alongside each other rather than overlapping.

This week's diary is about my anxiety about starting. Will I be able to keep up with the children, the requirements of volunteering and will my back stand up to whatever is needed? When I volunteered, I thought that I would be helping in the kitchen, leaving the most difficult part of the sessions, i.e. looking after the children, to someone else. Finding on our training day, 11th July, that I had been put down to support the children [play team], was quite daunting. I decided not to worry about it and have successfully put it on the back burner until the last couple of days. I feel sure it will all be OK on the day and will feel better once I have started. Having worked in the area before, dealing with Mental Health issues, I think I may have a slanted idea about what it will be like. The opposing knowledge is that I have helped in a school before and really enjoyed the experience, so I am hoping this will be as much fun as that was.

(Sadie, diary, July 2015)

Sadie shows a great deal of honesty in writing her first diary entry, which considering that she waived the option of anonymity in sending me her diary and continued to volunteer that summer, is reassuring for the research process; it can be questioned to what extent respondents are pressured into giving positive responses (A. Williams, 2017), but Sadie's

account is an example of how volunteers reported their experiences openly. Coming from a relatively privileged church outside of Lunch area, Sadie's anxiety centres on uncertainty of what to expect, and a miscommunication over which team (cooking or play) she wanted to volunteer for. Anxiety here is about a concern and nervousness for the future. Anxiety is therefore an affect that could decrease Sadie's affective capacity – and ultimately her capacity and will to act – by meaning she no longer wants to volunteer. Hence, if she is to still volunteer she must put in effort to address her anxiety and overcome this barrier to acting. Sadie is affected by past experiences in the area: "I think I may have a slanted idea about what it will be like." By comparing her past experience in the area to having enjoyed working in a school, the implication is that her past experience has not given a favourable impression. This could be understood as negatively impacting upon Sadie's affective capacity and ergo her capacity to act in that the past is causing anxiety for acting in the future. Subsequently, how Sadie engages with how she is affected by anxiety is significant. First, she is aware of her anxiety and so she is not under an illusion – as Spinoza fears for acting bodies – that she is entirely free to act without prior affections. To reiterate from Chapter Four, for Spinoza (1996, IIP40S), imagination is the lowest of the three forms of knowledge. To some extent Sadie recognises this in reflecting that after she has volunteered at Lunch – and therefore knows what to expect – she will be less anxious. Secondly, she recognises that her anxiety is transient and could improve: "I feel sure it will all be OK on the day and will feel better once I have started." Sadie's anxiety is consequently a mixture of affections from the past, and imaging the future. Thirdly then, it can be said that Sadie is actively engaging with how she is affected by anxiety, putting in effort to overcome this potential decrease in her affective capacity. Accordingly, Sadie recognises that her motivation is something that can build over time as she begins to be affected by experience, rather than imagination. In this way understanding the start of a person volunteering – and turning a motivation into action – through affect theory is insightful in how it emphasises knowledge forming as a process in our capacity and will to act: the affect of the past, present and possible imagined future upon the body's capacity to act.

Effort was also required to recruit volunteers for Lunch. The group of people volunteering on any one day at Lunch varied. As advertisements for volunteers predominantly went out through church networks the majority of volunteers were Christian, and volunteers ranged in their gender, ages, occupations, and social backgrounds. Running Lunch through the national charity MakeLunch made a difference in recruiting volunteers, a point Paul, on the church leadership team, picked up on:



Actually I think that's quite an important point - what was very striking about Lunch and your leading it, taking it forward, was people outside [the host church] kind of buy into this approach and are happy to get involved in a way that they wouldn't if you just said [the host church] are running a lunch club. So say it's the MakeLunch franchise and it's tackling food poverty, it kind of catches people's imagination...



(Paul, interview, March 2016)

Overlapping Paul's narrative with my own, as shown in figure three below I consciously advertised for volunteers using these terms having realised that the connection with a national charity and food poverty as a 'hot topic' made a positive difference to how people could be affected to start volunteering, and therefore to their capacity and will to act.

**Figure Three: Advert Used to Advertise for Volunteers (Source: Author, June 2016)**

 The flyer has a light green background. In the center is a white plate. To the left of the plate is a silver fork, and to the right is a silver knife. The text on the flyer is as follows:
 

**Can you volunteer to combat food poverty in [city]?**

**What?** Lunch gives *free hot meals & play* to local primary school aged children in the school holidays

**Why?** For some children their free school meal is the main meal of the day, so in the holidays they suffer from *holiday hunger*

**When?** Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1st - 25th August

**Where?** [Church Lunch ran at]

**Get involved: email [Kitchen name]@gmail.com**

 In the bottom left corner, there is a small logo for 'Make LUNCH' with the tagline 'FILLING THE HOLIDAY HUNGER GAP!'.

As I explored in Chapter One, Fyfe and Milligan (2003a; 2003b) have reflected on two key aspects of volunteering: that resources for voluntary welfare provision are unevenly distributed, and that the local impact of voluntary provision is variable. The narratives of Paul and myself respond to these reflections. First, the effort of volunteer recruitment was enhanced by being part of a national charity responding to holiday hunger. Both Paul and I believed that this attracted a wider number of volunteers from outside the community than

otherwise would have been likely. Secondly, this enabled a different scale of volunteering and provision by bringing people from resource rich and poorer areas together. The impact that the project could have on welfare provision was therefore changed by the sharing of resources across areas, and additionally by operating within a national charity that was also a social franchise. Amongst this group of volunteers, 'insider' and 'outsider' relationships then played out as people came to volunteer, and in how they positioned and understood themselves as volunteers. Rather than being terms employed at Lunch, these categories are used here to reflect people's positionality: 'insider' broadly refers to people from Lunch host church/community, and 'outsider' refers to anyone from outside Lunch church/community. Building upon Chapter Five, as a part of people's positionalities, these were not fixed categories (Valentine, 2002). In Chapter Seven I will return to them as they changed over time and became less prominent in people's experiences. I myself was initially an 'outsider' because I came from outside the host church and area, but over time I began to feel more accepted as the co-ordinator of Lunch by others at the host church. As it was first established Lunch was commonly seen by people at the host church as 'Stephanie's project', whereas as per the action research ideals that I discussed in Chapter Five, I intended for it to be collaborative process (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011). Further, by employing participatory methodologies, it was vital that these power relations were continually questioned rather than being accepted as unchanging (Kesby et al., 2009). In terms of affect this is important because these relationships and positionalities can be understood as meaning that people start to volunteer with different affective states and affective capacities, which are continually being affected and changing as a result of ongoing experience.

People's varying positionalities reiterates the effort needed to volunteer: it is crucial to recognise that starting to volunteer, even when motivated by faith, is not necessarily an easy action. Faith does not insure a person from being challenged by the effort of acting. Effort, in its varying forms, therefore directly relates to a person's capacity and will to act because it impacts upon bodies' affective capacity. The unknown in terms of 'insider' and 'outsider' relationships is vividly presented by two volunteers writing diaries independently about each other. First is Nora, a middle-aged lady from Lunch host church. Secondly, this chapter again meets Violet, a volunteer from a relatively privileged area and church.



My first session at Lunch tomorrow. I have not met the cooking leader and am quite worried as to what she will be like. Will she be bossy, or snobby and look down her nose at us.

(Nora, diary, July 2015)

This time the other two in the kitchen came from [Lunch church], a mother & daughter, rather than imports from middle class churches... I wonder how they feel about me coming into their church's kitchen, as cooking leader for the day: does it feel like an invasion, do I just seem like some middle class do-gooder?

(Violet, diary, July 2015)

Each day at Lunch a cooking leader was assigned (generally in advance) to lead the team of three in cooking lunch. The leader needed to be someone who had a food hygiene qualification – a local council and MakeLunch requirement – and from my point of view for the smooth running of the cooking, ideally someone with some catering experience. Both Violet and Nora fulfilled these criteria and led the team at different times; Violet throughout the fifteen months, and Nora after first being a cooking team member. Writing before the first summer holiday, Nora was concerned that the cooking leader might be “bossy, or snobby and look down her nose”. Conversely, the cooking leader being referred to (Violet) was concerned how she would come across asking “do I just seem like some middle class do-gooder?”; an image she was not keen to portray. Yet again it is the fear of the unknown, and the imagining of different scenarios which prevails here. These are affective efforts to be engaged with. People’s positionality – which contributes towards their affective capacity – impacts upon how a person approaches the situation, and what they expect of others. I emphasised in Chapter Five that positionalities are not fixed (Valentine, 2002). Here I add to this that affective capacities are also not fixed. In Chapter Seven I return to how the relationship between Nora and Violet grew over time. Therefore, whilst faith is a significant motivation for volunteering, it does not mitigate against the effort required to start volunteering.

Presently, I return to Amelia – who understood volunteering as performing her faith. Amelia was not from within the host church community or area, but she took action to change her own positionality and affective capacity before she started volunteering at Lunch. In this way she put effort into how she began to volunteer.

This is not a community of which I'm a part and a recurring concern was that I didn't want anyone to feel I had parachuted in to "do good works".

For the four or five Sundays before Lunch I began attending the Sunday Service at [the host church] in order to get a feel for the support both practical and prayerful that the church might/might not be offering. Perhaps I was looking for some "ownership" of the project in order to allay some of my "parachuting in" concerns.

(Amelia, diary, October 2015)

This is important in emphasising the possibility for change in affective capacity, building upon the idea that the affective body is constantly in a stage of transition from one affective state to another. Amelia attending services at the host church could be understood as a display of will in that she chose to attend; it was not a requirement of volunteering to also attend services. However, recognising as Spinoza (1996, VP14; VP22D) does that present actions are affected by the past and have prior causes, Amelia's action could be understood as being caused by her present (yet changing) affective capacity. Indeed, she recognises this possibility: "Perhaps I was looking for some 'ownership' of the project in order to allay some of my 'parachuting in' concerns." Yet a few months later, Amelia was a regular worshiper at the church, thereby making a transition in her positionality from someone outside to inside the local community. Amelia expresses a similar concern to Violet of being seen by others as a "do-gooder". This can be drawn out from Violet and Amelia's single narratives through Daniel who reflects on past collective motivations to act, but inaction from a fear of how to act until the opportunity to volunteer at Lunch emerged:

And the issue as we talked about it, and as we searched how to do that, was how can we in this posh area of [the city], very intelligent university context, do something at [host church area] without it seeming patronising or we're doing good-goody works because we want to feel good or we're doing something like that, how could we get the psychology of that right as it were. And we struggled with that to the extent of not really coming up with anything.

(Daniel, interview, September 2016)

Volunteering and coming together of people from different backgrounds could be understood in terms of citizenship and social capital (for example Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a; 2003b).

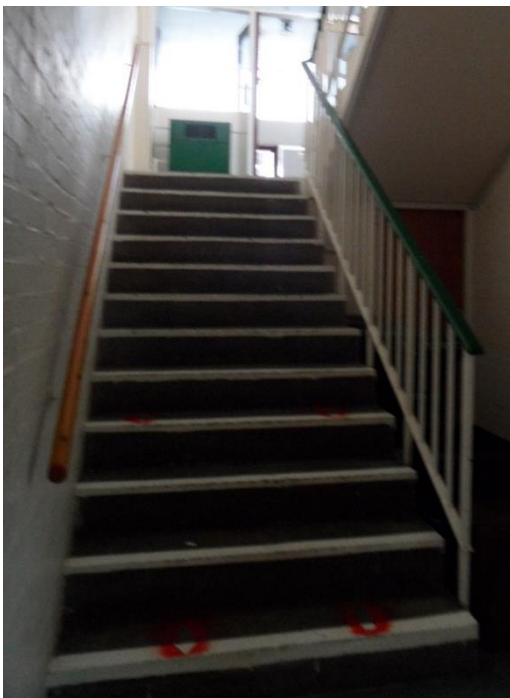
However, affect theory allows us to analyse the interactions between people, to understand the meaning that these actions took. The fear that Daniel refers to of how they would come

across and which in the past had decreased their capacity to act mirrors what I explored in the methodology which Brydon-Miller (2004, 3) calls the “terrifying truth”: fear of one’s own privilege can reduce a person to inaction. Just as I was concerned at my own church of coming across as “holier than thou”, so others were concerned at how their actions would be affectively received by other bodies that they would interact with when volunteering. For Daniel and others, it was not enough for volunteering at Lunch to be motivated by faith and therefore a performance of faith. Reiterating that performances of faith are not in isolation from other affects, what also mattered to them was *how* they were performing their faith, and how this would affect others. Whilst they had a degree of will in how they acted, they could not control other people’s affective capacity and how others would be affected by their actions. This is significant because affect theory shows us that a person’s will is not in isolation from other people; an individual is always relational to others and its environment (Bailey et al., 2008), and so whilst Amelia might have willed herself to come across in a certain way to others, ultimately should could not control how others would be affected. Over time, whilst fear had decreased Daniel and others’ capacity to act, the desire to volunteer remained, which they then acted upon when I recruited volunteers for Lunch. In this particular instance their capacity and will to act therefore developed over time as they were affected by different circumstances until volunteering became within their affective capacity.

Effort therefore relates to affective capacity: how much is required of a person to volunteer, and are they able to meet this requirement? A capacity to volunteer can take a variety of forms. For example, relating to the earlier discussion on the fear of the unknown, a person must be prepared to take on that fear of acting. As I ascertained in Chapter Two, affective capacity is central to the concept of affect; it is the body increasing or decreasing its power to act (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3). Affective capacity can also be understood in terms of what a body can do. Affect theory hence gives a distinct angle on what a body can do; it is not only physicality that is a concern, but also how the body has been affected in the past, and how the person approaches the future. In order to volunteer, each person needed to some extent to recognise their affective capacity – their ability – to be a suitable volunteer for Lunch because they needed to sign up to volunteer. What factors affected a person’s assessment of their affective capacity? Some people were personally asked to volunteer, but the majority of people became volunteers by responding to general requests and advertisements, for example in church notices, emails, newsletters, and on social media. Having time to volunteer was also a necessary dimension of a person’s affective capacity but volunteers were not simply people who did not work. Some volunteers took time off work or worked flexible hours to be able to volunteer, and several were teachers able to give time

in the school holidays. Others were people seeking work, full time parents, retired, or students. Whatever their circumstance, each needed to have sufficient time as a part of their affective capacity to be able to volunteer. Overall volunteering at Lunch was opt in; each person who volunteered needed to put themselves forward to volunteer. The commitment requested by myself to volunteers was limited to one holiday period at a time, the longest period being multiple days across the six weeks summer holidays, and the shortest one week half terms.

Age and health were key concerns around affective capacity, particularly for older volunteers; would they physically manage to volunteer? Some volunteers therefore paced how many times they could volunteer across a week or month because volunteering at Lunch required a significant amount of sustained energy. A person needed to evaluate their health as being good enough to manage a session with energetic children at Lunch, in a space that was not particularly accessible. However, affective capacity is more than the physical body. A person's attitude was also key; some volunteers were elderly, and not greatly active, but still volunteered to give what they could. Others reflected on this; for example Jack, the priest who spoke on Biblical teaching on faith as action, but struggled with action himself.



I was deeply moved at the training meeting at the arrival of two ladies each over eighty. It seemed to demonstrate what the faith is about. What love looks like. Turning up with a walking stick. Being there.

(Jack, diary, August 2015)

Jack's diary extract mirrors the idea of affective capacity to volunteer extending beyond physical capabilities: these ladies had assessed walking with a stick as being an effort and barrier that they could overcome to volunteer. There was not an exacting job description or list of requirements for a volunteer at Lunch. Here the faith-ethos of the project was important in that I endeavoured,

through Christian teaching, to value each volunteer for what they could bring, and in their individual affective capacity. This gives a layering of narratives and further meaning to Jack's extract: the effort by the ladies (who Jack attended church with) to be present affected Jack in that he was "deeply moved", and Jack related their presence to the Christian faith he

shared with them. It is significant then that Jack refers to the ladies “being there”; their presence and the effort they had undertaken to volunteer was recognised and valued by myself and other volunteers, no matter if they were less physically active than other volunteers, because each could bring different skills and perspectives to the group. Affect theory emphasises this relational aspect of bodies being together, and reiterates how one person’s affective capacity can affect another’s. Taking this further, Jack understood the ladies “being there” as expressing their faith. Hence affect theory is advantageous for analysing faith-based volunteering because it shows us how relationally an action can hold more meaning than what is represented in literally “being there”. Layering narratives over time and the development of our relational positionalities, this discussion builds upon Jack’s previously quoted passage on he finds “doing” harder than thinking. To what extent did Jack recognise his capacity to act as a volunteer? From knowing Jack outside of Lunch, I know that he continued to struggle with “doing” as a Lunch volunteer, and he did not volunteer again after the first summer. This presents a question for how to understand Jack’s motivation and volunteering through affect. To reiterate from Chapter Two: affect theory states that for a person to act, they must have the affective capacity to do so (Spinoza, 1996, I1D3). Taking this literally, by nature of him signing up to volunteer, Jack must have had the capacity to act as a volunteer. Was Jack aware of his capacity to act? Building upon questions from Chapter Four – how the body acts and what a body can do – affect theory adds another layer to this, suggesting that Jack was not necessarily aware of his capacity to act because he was caused to act by prior affections. I have already established that Jack was motivated by his faith, my church talk, and Biblical teaching. Here we can add a further prior cause: his interaction and witnessing of the elderly ladies volunteering added a further motivation and push towards taking the action of volunteering. Affect theory therefore provides layers to the question of affective capacity and volunteering: to act, a person must have the power to do so. Yet, they may or may not recognise their capacity to act. If they do, such as the elderly ladies, then it will be easier for a motivation to act to be turned into action. Otherwise, the effort of acting may prove too much to begin, or sustain, volunteering.

Overall, people presented different narratives around affective effort: Amelia actively responded to the fear of the unknown, whilst others such as Sadie responded by waiting and hoping that the experience would be better than she feared. Effort, therefore, goes against a romanticised notion to volunteering to show that starting to volunteer, even when motivated by faith, was not necessarily an easy action. This is significant for how in the geography of religion to approach performances of faith in people’s daily lives because such action should not be romanticised. Rather, faith performances can challenge actors. What is important here from affect theory is the interaction of past, present and potential future affects in how



volunteers understood and reacted to their affective capacity, which all contributed to a person starting to volunteer. Finally, a volunteer's affective capacity, their understanding of it, and to some extent recognition of their capacity to volunteer, are crucial in a person turning a motivation to volunteer into action.

### 3.2. *The Value of Enthusiasm*

In recent years, enthusiasm has been understood within human geography “as a shared passion and motivator to action” (Craggs et al., 2016, 1). Craggs et al. recognise that enthusiasm historically has had negative connotations with religious fanaticism, but in the context of volunteering can be productive and a motivation to act: “Enthusiasm matters because it has the capacity to move people and to result in change.” (Geoghegan, 2013 cited in Craggs et al., 2016, 2). It is through this “capacity to move people and to result in change” that enthusiasm is well matched to be understood through affect. This is because enthusiasm impacts upon people's capacity to act and can result in change, meaning that enthusiasm is an affect affecting people's affective capacity. The language of enthusiasm as presented here is therefore comparable to the language of affect. Yet, what more does affect add to the language of enthusiasm? Enthusiasm as an affect is distinct to enthusiasm as an emotion. Rather, enthusiasm as an affect emphasises the affect of enthusiasm upon the relationality between bodies, remembering also that an affect operates at a level in-between and beyond bodies (Hynes, 2011). Enthusiasm can therefore affect a person's capacity to act through an affection of encouragement and from positive affections between bodies. In faith-based volunteering, affect adds to this an understanding of how enthusiasm is an affect in combination with faith. This is because faith is not necessarily represented in the volunteering experience, but through affect this analysis is able to recognise these “more-than” what is explicit elements of experience, including the value and affect of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm therefore interacts with faith for how to understand faith as being performed in people's daily lives through volunteering at Lunch.

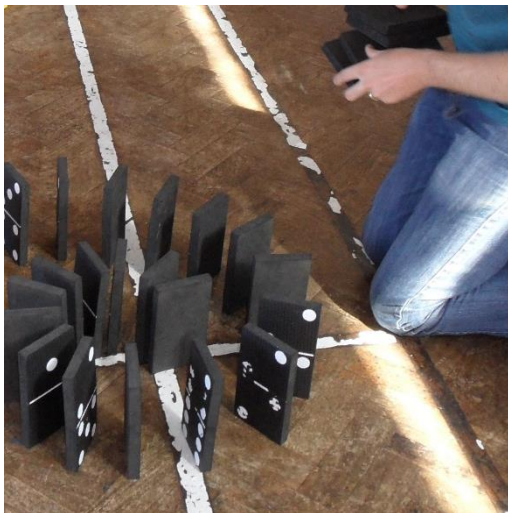
The narrative of my own enthusiasm in relation to Lunch is dominated by fluctuation; enthusiasm being an affect means that is not fixed but rather is continually formed in each moment:

It's amazing what difference a week can make! A week ago I was confused, stressed and uncertain what food hygiene regulations, qualifications and training I need Lunch to comply with... What seemed like a huge task now seems much more manageable as my knowledge has grown and I am becoming more confident in my ability to set up the cooking. (My diary, April 2015)



I found establishing Lunch a steep learning curve. The above diary entry shows the development of this learning curve over the short period of one week as I began to understand the required food hygiene regulations. Enthusiasm for Lunch was important in wanting to gain this knowledge, and in turn also related to confidence; enthusiasm could be both an affect and an affection because it was both a motivator and an effect from acting. In the above abstract one small success – understanding the food hygiene requirements – resulted in enthusiasm to continue implementing this knowledge. As an affection, enthusiasm could therefore be imperative in maintaining momentum and drive in establishing and running Lunch. In this sense enthusiasm as both an affect and affection highlights affects as being both lasting and ephemeral. A Spinozian understanding of affect emphasises the latter, but as with the power of faith as an idea, enthusiasm as a motivator (affect) and as an affection could be longer lasting. Enthusiasm was therefore a significant affect alongside faith to my capacity and will to sustain the motivation to establish Lunch.

Enthusiasm played varying roles in motivating volunteers at Lunch, both as they started to volunteer, and to persist in volunteering. One volunteer for whom enthusiasm was particularly apparent – both in his diaries and how he came across at Lunch – was Tony. Tony is in his mid-80s and came to volunteer from a privileged church outside of where Lunch ran. He volunteered every time that Lunch opened during the period I ran it. He wrote about his first day volunteering:



I am introduced to my [play session] leader... she is clearly disconcerted by my grey hairs and merely nodded. "Show more enthusiasm" I said. She grinned and we got on well after that. The children report in at the foot of the stairs – stuck a name badge and I feel nervous as they are more experienced at what was happening than me. I play dominoes with enormous parts on the floor but find the kneeling process difficult.

(Tony, diary, July 2015)

Tony's enthusiastic attitude influenced others such as the play team leader in how they viewed him. To Tony, the affection for other volunteers from his elderly physical appearance contrasted to his enthusiasm and what he perceived himself as being capable of; he regularly volunteered to lead the football match rather than a more sedentary craft activity. What is clear here is how Tony's enthusiasm is an affect beyond the subject which both affects other bodies, and Tony's own power and capacity to act. The affection upon Tony of

enthusiasm impacted upon how he approached future times volunteering at Lunch. For example, this diary extracts ends with his difficulty of kneeling to play dominoes on the floor. On future occasions at Lunch Tony brought a smaller set of dominoes to play at table which was physically less difficult than kneeling on the floor. It is only through moments such as this that I highlight a particular characteristic – age – of Tony. At other moments gender, social background, or another characteristic affects, but being a thematic analysis around volunteer's narratives, these are not drawn out individually because they were not emphasised further in volunteers' experiences or my own. Furthermore, a recent NCVO (2017a) report shows that gender does not affect the likelihood of a person formally volunteering. Through his enthusiasm to volunteer Tony therefore adapted activities to be physically within the affective capacity of his body, whilst at other times also challenging other volunteers (and likely the children) in what that affective capacity was. Tony's enthusiasm did not make him immune to the anxiety which was also a significant affect for volunteers. Tony was also concerned on his first day of volunteering that the children knew more of the routine for Lunch than he did. However, his enthusiasm as an affect outweighed his anxiety in terms of his capacity to act because ultimately he enjoyed the experience. In the next chapter I return to enjoyment to explore the impact of experience upon future action. Here, I emphasise the interaction between different affects – including faith, anxiety, and enthusiasm – of motivating volunteers to act out their faith in their daily lives, with a wider implication for society in responding to holiday hunger. Affect theory is important to show that this was not a linear process, but rather interacted and changed for different people, and at different times.

Affecting the range of enthusiasm narratives, I should recognise that different volunteers had different levels of commitment to volunteering at Lunch, and building upon Chapter Five, this impacts upon their positionalities and how the narratives of myself and other volunteers overlap. With volunteers such as Tony who volunteered every holiday that Lunch opened, for myself as Lunch co-ordinator it made a positive difference to my affective capacity to know I could rely upon Tony to volunteer each holiday and to approach it with enthusiasm. Linking to enthusiasm and commitment, a hope and expectation of enjoyment was important to some volunteers, as addressed by Camilla in her diary entry before Lunch opened for its first summer:

Two main thoughts prior to the first day of Lunch – I wonder if any kids will come, and I hope it's enjoyable. In terms of the latter, I'm aware that I've volunteered to help out twice a week for the whole [summer] holiday because I think projects like these are important in the light of current government attitudes to welfare. But just because something is the right thing to do, doesn't mean it's fun!

(Camilla, diary, July 2015)

Camilla came to volunteer as a Christian from another church nearby the area in which Lunch ran. Her later diary entries link her faith with social justice, as well as the government welfare cuts which she refers to in this diary entry. For the first summer that we opened Lunch Camilla volunteered two days for the whole six weeks, so it is in this context that the final line is poignant; “just because something is the right thing to do, doesn't mean it's fun!” Camilla has strong convictions that volunteering is the right thing to do, but also wants to enjoy herself; she hopes that she will be positively affected by the experience of volunteering. A faith and social justice motivation – which I have understood here as affects – therefore does not necessitate exclusively altruistic motivations, but rather operates in conjunction with different affects that motivate the body to act in this particular volunteering instance at Lunch.

Overall, both affective effort and enthusiasm interacted in varying ways with the motivations of faith for volunteers to move from a general motivation to volunteer and a capacity to act, to specifically begin volunteering at Lunch. Each volunteer's narrative was distinct because each had a distinct and developing affective capacity, and therefore each body was affected differently; each person could have been affected by the same experience differently (Spinoza, 1996, IIPXIIILIIIAII). Understanding this through affect has allowed us to understand that these different components were not necessarily made explicit and represented by volunteers – for example the fear of the unknown – but nevertheless played a significant part in how their capacity to act as a volunteer materialised. Affect theory shows us, then, that how a volunteer interacted with how they were affected by the prospect of starting to volunteer was crucial in turning a motivation into action.

#### **4. Conclusions: Faith-based Action and Inaction**

This chapter has responded to the first research question: “How can we understand our capacity and will to act?” Immediately this raises a contribution of this research: for an affect theory approach to the geography of religion, or indeed any application, research cannot only focus on an affective analysis of experience. Rather, it must start with how it is that the body comes to act. This question is framed within the vital question of how a person starts volunteering; significant because welfare responses to UK food poverty are increasingly relying upon volunteers, and if projects are to be sustainable then we need to start at the beginning of their volunteering journey and understand how a person starts to volunteer. Approaching this question through affect theory has given an analysis that moves beyond a quantitative analysis of what factors motivate people to volunteer, to explore *how* people are motivated by their Christian faith to volunteer. This approach hence builds upon the understanding of faith from Chapter Three; faith primarily is about the personal relationship between a person and God. Affect theory takes this further: faith is also something that affects how a person acts, and in this way is performed throughout a person's daily life; thereby contributing towards a key focus identified in Chapter Two for the geography of religion. It is in this way that I can understand faith as an affect because it motivates and impacts how a person acts. This takes us beyond an identity or ethos approach to volunteering to analyse the power of faith as a motivation to act, and how this in turn is performed in people's daily lives, affecting both the volunteer and the traditional “recipient”.

In conclusion, faith is a significant affect which changed people's capacities and will to act by motivating them to volunteer at Lunch. Ultimately each person's faith is personal, and therefore how it motivated them, and how this translated into performances of faith at Lunch, was different for each person. This said, reflecting the way that volunteers predominantly understood their faith and its relation to social action, the main way that faith motivated people to volunteer was through Christian teaching on helping others. In this way, volunteering at Lunch was a performance of their faith. Had there been more volunteers from an evangelist background then the emphasis could have been more on responding to need *and* aiming to convert people to Christianity which would have broadened faith performances explored in this work. Lunch and volunteers' performances of faith were therefore a distinct form of social action that was not necessarily explicitly faith-based to the observer, other than the fact that it took place in a church hall. This contributes to the geography of religion's understanding of the role that religion can play in society; faith-based projects responding to food poverty can have a faith motivation and ethos for volunteers

without having religious content for participants. This therefore contributes to the debate that I explored in Chapter Two through what Cloke (2015) refers to as postsecularity: where faith groups undertake welfare provision for its own sake, but nevertheless faith groups play an active role in society.

As with any affect, once faith is understood as an affect then it is necessary to recognise that this does not motivate in isolation from other affects. One affect that faith operated alongside in volunteers' narratives was politics. Moving beyond an institutional framing of volunteering and right-based critiques to volunteering, Lunch was a means for some volunteers to challenge the UK's political situation. Volunteering was hence a collation of active performances of faith and other factors in society, and multiple volunteers understood the knowledge that they gained from these experiences as a way to challenge wider society's perceptions of people experiencing food poverty. Finally, some volunteers did not isolate their faith as a motivation to volunteer because they understood their faith as impacting upon their whole life, and therefore their capacity and will to act in every situation. Affect theory is advantageous here to analyse faith that is not always verbalised as a motivation, but nevertheless was of crucial significance in how a person acts, and ultimately their performances of faith in their daily life. This begs the question of how to understand through affect theory that in their faith, people understood God as having an active presence in their lives. God, for Spinoza (1996) is an infinite substance (Idef6) that necessarily exists (IP11; IP11D), and is the cause of all bodies and their affections (VP14; VP22D). In Spinozian terms God can play an active role in people's lives through affecting people's capacity to act, which reiterates understanding faith as active. Ultimately, how a person is affected and motivated by their faith will be distinct for each person, and had the volunteers at Lunch been different people then how faith motivates action also could have been different.

Faith was an important set of motivations for action, but not the only influence. A motivation does not necessarily result in action being taken: people needed to move from a general faith motivation of helping people in need, to putting themselves forward to volunteer at Lunch. Effort and enthusiasm were key themes in people's capacities to act and physically starting to volunteer: for example anxiety at the unknown, effort for Lunch to run, and a hope of enjoyment. The volunteers and I fluctuated between different moments of effort and enthusiasm as we were affected by starting to volunteer. This takes us beyond an understanding of volunteering as fostering citizenship or social capital to the meaning that starting to volunteer holds for individuals. Affect theory is important, then, in showing us how a person's positionality – a contributor to their affective capacity which changes over time –

links the past, present and future for their capacity to act and therefore how they approach the situation and others at Lunch.

Following Spinoza's conception of affect theory means that I cannot consider the concept of affect in isolation from Spinoza's wider theorisations in *Ethics*. Indeed, it is a contribution from this research to affective geographies to move beyond a focus on affect alone, to question how the body comes to act, and to utilise the wider conceptualisation in which affect is framed, including affection and affective capacity. In particular, Spinoza's three forms of knowledge have been significant in forming an understanding of how a person acts: imagination (the lowest form of knowledge) could prevail before a person volunteers, but if people engaged with this affect to recognise that their knowledge develops as a process and would change once they had volunteered, then this could mitigate the fear of the unknown. This led to the question of whether people recognised their affective capacity to volunteer. At one level the answer is that they must have because each person needed to actively put themselves forward to volunteer, and Spinoza's (1996, Illdef3) very conception of action shows us that a person cannot act if it is not within their affective capacity. Yet, how a person engaged with the affections of effort and enthusiasm differed, and were hence important in how action was instigated. Some started to volunteer with enthusiasm and self-belief in their capacities, whereas others remained focussed on the effort it would take to volunteer and started with hesitancy in their ability. This emphasises the differences in people's volunteering narratives, particularly in terms of their varying commitment to Lunch.

A question remains: how well through affect can we harness the power of faith? Affect theory emphasises that faith as an affect is not a one-off or isolated event, and does not operate in isolation from other affects. Rather, faith continually affects the body, and the body is continually changing and entering into new relationalities. This is both an advantage and disadvantage of using affect theory to analyse faith: affect does not prioritise one affect over others, which means that research can understand faith as an affect as relational to other affects, and yet it also must not lose the heightened significance of faith in motivating action for volunteers at Lunch. Does faith then also speak back to how to understand affect theory? This is most prominent in highlighting the complexity of active and passive affections: the affections on volunteers from faith and politics cannot be easily reconciled as active or passive in the Spinozian sense of whether the volunteer was the cause. Rather, how volunteers engaged with these affections was imperative in the longer term affection and implications for motivating action. In analysing faith through affect theory, in order to harness the power of faith as an affect, we need to emphasise the scale of affection that faithful subjects receive from their personal faith: it is not on the same level as other affects,

because it is ontologically distinct and it has the potential to affect the way that a person lives every aspect their daily life. This is important for the research's contribution to the geography of religion: faith is performed in people's daily lives, but in a complex interaction with other affects, and faith is a powerful affect that can motivate action, but also challenge a person in how they *should* or *could* act.

Overall, through the interactions of these affects – across and between bodies, ideas, and spaces – I have found both faith-based social action, and inaction. This is because whilst faith might encourage action, the effort and need to overcome the fear of the unknown could also result in inaction. Bringing together discussions of will throughout this chapter and building upon Chapter Four, I can ask what is the relationship between faith, affect and will in how a person starts for volunteer? Was faith an affect that was simply a compulsion to volunteer? Remember from Chapter Four that for Spinoza (1996, VP45D, 164-165), a person acting with will means that they are aware of the prior causes under which they are acting. To what extent were volunteers aware of the prior causes of their actions? This is methodologically difficult to ascertain because I cannot know what people have not written or spoken about. However, volunteers' narratives did recognise the significance of faith in motivating action. In this way, faith was a clear affect and motivation for people to volunteer, making being a Christian a prior cause for volunteers' action. The question, then, is does their awareness of faith as a cause exceed what Spinoza (1996, VP45D) calls the imagining of will? I could answer this in the negative, arguing that volunteers did not act with will because their faith, and ergo God, determined their faith motivation to act. However, their faith did not determine volunteering at this specific project: there were numerous other projects that a person could volunteer at to meet the same motivation. Each person was therefore affected by their own distinct circumstances and affections, of which faith is a significant one, to display an element of will in how they responded to these prior causes, and to put themselves forward to volunteer at Lunch. This is just the start of a person's volunteering experience; in the next chapter I turn to the persistence of action over time.





## **Chapter Seven: Reflecting and Persisting in Action**

### **1. Introduction**

The first analysis chapter led us through the start of volunteers' journeys, building an understanding of our capacity and will to act. Faith-based organisations are crucial in responding to UK food poverty. Yet, when many of these organisations rely upon volunteers to run, unless a project recruits new volunteers for every day or activity, then they will need to retain volunteers. The former is unlikely to be practical or sustainable, meaning that voluntary organisations need to be able to retain volunteers. A person's commitment to volunteering is never guaranteed (Clove et al., 2007). It is therefore not enough to understand how faith motivates a person to act. Rather, we also need to understand how a person reflects, and persists in that faith-motivated action. This understanding is needed both for voluntary groups relying upon volunteers if their work is to be sustainable, and for the geography of religion if it is to comprehensively take faith-based organisations as a focus of enquiry.

As with many faith-based organisations, Lunch relied upon volunteers to run. It was therefore never a given that Lunch would open, and it was a continual necessity to recruit and retain volunteers. This chapter continues the volunteers' journeys, asking what happened after the first time people volunteered. I therefore need the second and third research questions to continue the story: "How do we have the capacity and will to reflect upon our actions?" and "How is there an impact of having acted and reflected upon the persistence of action?" This chapter explores the impact of affects upon future action, how faithful subjects – volunteers – reflect upon past volunteering experiences at Lunch, and the role that this reflection contributes to whether or not they will persist in volunteering. Wider research on volunteering has identified a variety of reasons for why people stop volunteering. For example, NCVO (2015) found that the main reasons that people stopped volunteering were changes in their circumstances, not having enough time, or their age and/or health. Indeed, volunteer burnout is a problem for organisations, and can result in a high turnover of volunteers (Wilson, 2000). Building upon this, Yanay and Yanay (2008) argue that there is a difference between people feel they "ought" to do and their "actual experiences" which can result in a person stopping volunteering. These factors form the background to this research's more specific focus on action and affect theory. By methodologically engaging with people as they volunteered at Lunch – rather than after a person stopped volunteering – this chapter gives a distinct angle to volunteers' persistence. This is that the chapter focusses upon *how* people persisted in volunteering, rather than the

question of why a person would stop volunteering. For voluntary sector sustainability, I argue that the question of how people persist in volunteering is just as important as why people stop volunteering because understanding the former can help an organisation sustain its volunteers.

I approach reflection and persistence in action through affect theory. As with Chapter Six, through this I contribute directly to understanding the mechanism of affect theory, and to an affect theory approach to the geography of religion. Two insights of affect theory for faith-based research are particularly pertinent to understanding volunteering and reflection. First, the shared faith positionality between myself and the majority of Lunch volunteers is significant in how we and I could reflect on the volunteering narratives. This is because our shared faith gives a commonality and shared understanding that would have been different had I not also been Christian. These narratives are one means through which reflection on persisting in volunteering occurred. Volunteers' and my own ongoing diaries are particularly insightful for understanding our reflections, and our persistence of action over time, because daily extracts can be analysed in the context of other extracts in order to build up a greater picture of the volunteer journey. This is especially so within the wider action research and participatory methodologies because these give the researcher access to a greater depth of volunteers' experiences. Secondly, understanding action through affect, affection, and conatus gives the opportunity for a different conceptualisation of reflection compared to a more representational approach. This is because through affect theory I can move beyond accounts of what happened each day at Lunch to *how* it happened and what meaning this held for volunteers. To put this another way, I move beyond representation to the meaning of experience, and how volunteers were affected by experiences, and then persisted in acting. Such affections are a second level of reflection. This chapter therefore engages with reflection on persisting in volunteering on two levels. First there are volunteers' and my reflections, captured in diaries and interviews. Secondly, affect theory's combination of affect and affection extends reflection beyond the self to explore ongoing commitment that is more than just self-reflection because it extends to reflection on Lunch itself, to how volunteers were affected by their experiences, and how that relates to a volunteer's desire to persevere in existence itself (conatus).

At Lunch people signed up to volunteer around a month before each individual holiday, rather than committing to volunteer for a longer period of time or indefinitely. The reasoning for this was primarily logistical in the way dates for Lunch were planned. However, for understanding the persistence of action, this is significant because it meant that a person needed to consciously decide each time if they were going to volunteer. Figure four

reiterates the timeframe this research followed for Lunch which is necessary to grasp in order to understand volunteers' reflections over time.

**Figure Four: School Holidays in which Lunch Opened in the Research Period**



2015	July	Summer holidays
	August	
	September	<i>Term time</i>
	October	Half-term holiday
	November	<i>Term time</i>
	December	Christmas holidays
2016	January	<i>Term time</i>
	February	Half-term holiday
	March	<i>Term time</i>
	April	Easter holidays
	May	Half-term holiday
	June	<i>Term time</i>
	July	Summer holidays
	August	
	September	<i>Term time and Lunch handover</i>

Amelia, who we met in Chapter Six, asks a question that is key to the persistence of action:

Somebody saying "it's such a great project" [so people will want to keep volunteering] it took me up short and I thought well I really hope you're right. I'd like to be a nice person but actually if I was having a miserable time would I still do it or would I find another project?

(Amelia, interview, September 2016)

Amelia was surprised at another person's assumption that people would continue to volunteer at Lunch because of it responding to holiday hunger and being a 'worthy cause'. Her reaction questions if this is enough; "if I was having a miserable time would I still do it or would I find another project?" This emphasises the urgency for voluntary group leaders to understand their volunteers' motivations, experiences, and reflections: a faith motivation to respond to food poverty is not necessarily linked to a specific project because as Amelia recognises, it is likely that there will be a wealth of other local projects also responding to food poverty. Translating this to Lunch context: if still motivated to volunteer, how would a volunteer persist in acting at Lunch rather than move to another project? Spinoza's concept

of conatus is particularly useful here. Remember from Chapter Two that conatus is about the body's desire to persevere in existence; how the body pushes forward to future action (Spinoza, 1996, IIP6). Conatus is useful, then, because it shows us that a person is unlikely to continue in an action, for example volunteering, if that action is negatively affecting the body because this would negatively impact their conatus. Crucially, persevering in being is not necessarily synonymous with persisting in action such as volunteering. Conatus therefore allow us to appreciate that faith motivations do not immunise the volunteer from being challenged by their experience, and if circumstances dictate, from seeking an alternative and more positive experience elsewhere.

This chapter is structured with three themes. First, I explore how relationships developed at Lunch: team work as people came together to volunteer, different people's willingness and unwillingness, and the growth of friendship and care amongst volunteers. Through these concerns I ascertain changes in volunteers' affective capacities as they are affected by the experiences they have at Lunch. Over time as relationships developed between volunteers, I find that their coming together becomes about more than simply responding together to food poverty, and begin to see the impact upon the volunteer.

In the second theme, I explore my own and volunteers' reflections on their volunteering experience over time. How did their expectations compare to experiences at Lunch? Then, building upon the fear of the unknown impacting volunteers' motivations in Chapter Six, here I explore how volunteering became more familiar over time, both for specific individuals and overall as Lunch became established with a routine. How does this affect volunteers in acting in the future? Finally, what is the impact of specific passing moments with the children upon reflection and persisting in action?

Following on from this, the third theme questions how affective motivations are constantly re-ignited for a person to persist in volunteering. Rather than understanding re-igniting as a stop and start in affects, here I explore the contribution of experience to how motivations must be continually renewed, and question if a personal connection to myself gave some volunteers a pressure to continue volunteering. Secondly, how are bodies affected by a sense of achievement, and what difference does recognition of achievement make? Finally, I return to a concern from before volunteering, to explore the importance of enjoyment in the volunteering experience, and how that interacts with faith.

I conclude that the persistence of action for both volunteers and myself can be understood as a continual process of motivation, action and reflection in which people are affected by

their volunteering experiences, reflect on their motivations, and must re-ignite their motivations to persist in volunteering.

## **2. Developing Relationships**

Lunch was transient. On any one day at Lunch, the majority of volunteers did not know each other before they volunteered, or knew a limited number of volunteers but not necessarily people volunteering on the same day as themselves. As I reflected in Chapter Six, people came together to volunteer from a wide variety of backgrounds which meant that people did not always have a significant amount in common – aside from them wanting to volunteer at Lunch – which in itself is a significant commonality. There were typically three people in the cooking team, and up to ten people in the play team, each including a leader, plus myself as Lunch co-ordinator. With seventy-eight volunteers in total from July 2015 to September 2016, the group of volunteers varied day-to-day. Some came regularly (approximately 25% volunteered four or more of the seven holidays), and others came for one day only (approximately 25%). The children at Lunch also varied, both in terms of who and how many came. Between July 2015 and September 2016 we served over 770 meals to over 100 children, with an average of nine children/day over summer 2015, and an average of twenty-six children over summer 2016. It is in this changing context which I explore the developing relationships at Lunch. By nature of this research on volunteering, I focus on the volunteers' perspectives of relationships, in terms of their relationships with each other, and with the children.

First, relationships developed as volunteers worked together over multiple days and holidays. There is then an added complexity: as regular volunteers became a team, new volunteers with varying degrees of intended commitment to Lunch were constantly added to the mix each holiday Lunch opened. To what degree did volunteers feel like a team? This discussion builds upon people's concerns in Chapter Six of insider and outsider relationships. Hence, being already affected by their expectations of the experience, how volunteers then interacted and were affected by their experiences at Lunch is vital to how they then reflect and persist (or not) in volunteering. Through these concerns it is important to recognise that volunteers came to Lunch with varying degrees of commitment, both in terms of one particular day volunteering, and to Lunch in the longer term. Relating to Chapter Four on affect and will, this can be understood this in terms of willingness and unwillingness. How did people's (un)willingness (through my perception and that of others) affect my running of Lunch? Secondly, as relationships developed, in both volunteers' narratives and my own narrative, friendship and care emerged both within the volunteer

team, and with the children at Lunch. These more personal elements are particularly significant in how people then reflected upon their action, which I take forward into the remainder of this chapter.

### 2.1. *Volunteers Together: Willingness and Unwillingness*

The group of volunteers at Lunch could be both consistent and transient with one-off and regular volunteers. Clara, a volunteer from the host church, reflected that people were brought together through their common aim of responding to children's holiday hunger.

I think there is a unity and purpose, unspoken, and we all want the best for the children and nobody seems to take offence or anything so I think it's a lovely team. Although we come from all those different churches, the unity and purpose is there.

(Clara, interview, August 2016)

It is poignant that Clara refers to this commonality as "unspoken". In going beyond representation as "more-than" (Lorimer, 2005, 84), affect theory is an ideal means through which to understand this unity. Clara is affected, then, by the exchange of common notions – of compatibility (Spinoza, 1996, IIP39) – between volunteers, and perceives that others are affected in the same way, meaning the "unity of purpose" takes on a collective dimension of affection. For Clara this perception overrides what could have been a point of difference; that volunteers came from different churches. Whilst Clara reflects on this in an interview, the reflection also extends beyond herself as a subject because she has already been affected by this sense of commonality which was beyond her individual self.

However, in interviews with volunteers there were mixed opinions as to what degree the group of volunteers felt like a team, with uncertainty as the group varied day-to-day. Members of the cooking and play team tended to each perceive the other as being more "team like", each seeing the other as spending more time together, which would increase the potential for affects to be exchanged. Building upon Chapter Six, through both volunteers' and my own narratives, people working together improved over time as people became a part of Lunch, rather than it being about their past backgrounds and "insiders" or "outsiders". In my own narrative this could be portrayed in subtle ways, for example a member of the church leadership unfreezing mincemeat on a Sunday ready for Lunch the next day, which saved me travelling over to the host church especially. As Clara highlighted, the focus at Lunch was on the children, and volunteers' time was busy with setting up, cooking, running children's activities, the meal time, and clearing away. This could leave little time for volunteers to speak amongst themselves. Recognising the need for time for people to get to know each other, we introduced a break for volunteers with tea and cake once setting up

was complete, and before the children arrived. This was a purposeful intervention to increase the possibility of increasing volunteers' affective capacities and common notions as they developed relationships.

I was not detached from the need to develop positive relationships myself, and in particular with the church leadership to secure their support for the future of Lunch. Some, but not all, of the church leadership volunteered at Lunch which meant that both present and absent bodies reflected and decided on its future. Paul, a part of the church leadership who was present for much of the time, reflected on the type of atmosphere he endeavoured for at Lunch's host church:



And something I've really tried to model is an atmosphere of come on in, everyone can play a part in different ways, everyone is welcome, but you are up against battles and other people's instincts are to police things and be gatekeepers rather than to be permissive and I think you can see that in some ways in the story of Lunch.

(Paul, interview, March 2016)

Here there is an overlap in narratives as Paul, on the church leadership, also recognises that the development of Lunch was not unproblematic in terms of relationships. As in Chapter Six, affect theory allows us to analyse this experience in a way that moves beyond the organisational space of volunteering (for example see Conradson, 2003) to the practice and relationships at Lunch. Paul uses the word “atmosphere” which can be mapped onto the recent development of affective atmospheres in affective geographies that I outlined in Chapter Two. Paul attempted to engineer a particular affective atmosphere at the church, but this had limited success of how others were in turn affected because a body cannot generate an atmosphere on its own (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2016). This meant that Paul could not control how affects from his body were in turn received; an atmosphere affects different people differently (Bissell, 2010), and no atmosphere can entirely be engineered and instead they remain transient (B. Anderson, 2014). Paul does not give detail of how he “tried to model an atmosphere” so I can only make inferences and continue to overlap our narratives: he writes that broadly he wanted an atmosphere at the church where people from different backgrounds could work together to a common cause. I can add to this that at Lunch I endeavoured to do this with volunteers coming from a variety of churches and life experiences, and infer that Paul saw this as adding to the atmosphere he “tried to model”. Indeed, from other conversations I know that Paul recognised that I had come from

outside the local area and congregation to establish Lunch. I also know that in the early stages of establishing Lunch, Paul received comments from other “gatekeepers” at the church who perhaps did not support my coming from the outside. I can infer that Paul recognises a degree of unwillingness at points amongst others who influenced the development of Lunch. However, Paul also refers to “the story of Lunch”: this was not the end point. Rather, he and I both made efforts to improve these relationships, as my diary in the first Christmas holidays shows:

I reflected today how different preparing for the Christmas party is compared to the summer now that there are better and positive relationships between myself and the church leadership. We have been emailing and can now have a conversation by email without it descending into offence and misunderstanding. There is more trust and things are seen less as problems and more as opportunities. That said I am still very careful how I phrase my emails, use positive language, give credit and try to depersonalise my suggestions.

(My diary, November 2015)

As I reflected in my diary, six months after planning the first summer holidays, I found planning for Lunch at Christmas was a different experience because of the change in teamwork between myself and others in the church leadership; I was affected by these affections in a way that extended beyond myself to relationships between us. I could not control these relationships but could endeavour to affect them through how I interacted with other people. I purposely attempted for positive affections which would increase both my power to act, and that of others. Reflecting on Chapter Five’s discussion of positionality, as our positionalities changed our relationships developed, categories of insiders/outsideers became less applicable, and we were able to work together more effectively (Valentine, 2002). For example, I attempted to depersonalise our discussions to make it about the logistics of Lunch, rather than putting ideas across as a personal suggestion which could have affected others (and unintentionally did previously) as a personal criticism. These tensions and developing relationships can be understood in terms of willingness and unwillingness towards each other, and the future of Lunch, and these developed over time.

As regular volunteers’ relationships became more established, for the volunteer group to function effectively it was important that new volunteers were integrated into the (transient) sense of team. There was an overlap, then, between individual volunteer’s narratives as they were at different stages of their volunteering experience; some committed volunteers, and others starting. By August 2016, Violet had been volunteering at Lunch every school holiday for a year. She has therefore developed a significant level of commitment to Lunch,



and worked with myself and others to reflect on and develop practices, for example how to serve vegetables in an attractive way that the children are more likely to eat. Violet wrote about two new volunteers starting on the cooking team.



This time we also had an untried menu item (beef burgers from scratch) and two new volunteers. As ever, there's a bit of cultural snobbery to be gone through, the explanation as to why it's important the carrots and cucumber are served separately resulting in the usual "when I was growing up, we had to do x ..." and "if you're hungry, you'd just eat it" comments. It's all part of the learning curve, though, and I ignore it and get on with making burger patties.

(Violet, diary, August 2016)

Once again, an affect theory approach is advantageous to understand what more was happening at Lunch beyond the literal provision of food. First, the "untried menu item" is significant because for both other volunteers and myself there was apprehension after past experiences as to whether the children would eat new dishes. We were affected by an early rejection by the children of chicken curry to change our cooking and serving practices, and felt apprehension on days where new recipes were introduced. It is likely, then, that Violet as the cooking leader was more apprehensive on this occasion than she would have been with a previously tested menu, and this could have affected how she interacted with the new volunteers.

Secondly, the two new volunteers came from outside the host church, and Violet comments "as ever, there's a bit of cultural snobbery to be gone through". She phrases this almost as an inevitable passing of time, to which an insight into can be gained from Spinoza's (1996, IIP40S) three levels of knowledge which I explored in Chapter Four: ignorance and imagination come first, followed by reason and then intuition as knowledge is gained. Violet refers to "cultural snobbery *to be gone through*" which building upon Chapter Five emphasises knowledge formation as a process, so how for Spinoza can people move onto higher forms of knowledge? For Spinoza, a body gaining knowledge and its power to act are intertwined and happen over time because the more an affect is understood, the more power that can be gained from it (1996, VP3C). However, humans are not born with this knowledge, and over time some will gain more than others (Gatens and Lloyd, 1999). Also to reiterate from Chapter Four, intuition as the highest form of knowledge for Spinoza is

associated with an adequate idea; equivalent of a true idea (Spinoza, 1996, IIdf4) which means that it is adequate to God (IIP43D) or in other words, that the idea is its own cause (Hardt, 1993). Affect theory and Spinoza's forms of knowledge mean that volunteering can be understood at Lunch as a process; beforehand there are preconceptions and imagination of what the experience will be like, how the children are, and how the cooking should take place. Experience will then either confirm imagination as accurate, and therefore as being a higher form of knowledge, or imagination will be replaced with intuition as knowledge of experiences at Lunch is gained. Gaining knowledge therefore follows from what Violet then calls a "learning curve"; the more time a volunteer spends at Lunch, the more "cultural snobbery" is replaced with understanding of experiences at Lunch, rather than imagined preconceptions. Part of gaining knowledge can be understanding the complexity of food poverty, and questioning the politics of hunger; why should a person be forced to eat what is available, rather than have agency in their food choices (Cameron, 2014)? Just as we cannot be guaranteed to move through Spinoza's forms of knowledge, so this learning curve is not a guaranteed process. What Violet calls "cultural snobbery" could therefore remain for some volunteers, and it is questionable that anyone can reach the third form of knowledge, intuition, because humans are always affected so the idea is unlikely to be adequate. Indeed, adding to Violet's reflection with my own, one of the volunteers she referred to did not volunteer after his two sessions that week and questioned me further on the practices of serving food at Lunch. For the purposes of understanding the persistence of action, how these bodies interact and are affected is important in how the group of volunteers can function. Violet claims not to be affected by the others' comments (her reflection in the moment), but the fact that she recounts this experience in detail in her diary and reflects on it afterwards suggests otherwise. It is in this way that whilst Violet shares a reflection in her diary, this reflection also extends beyond self-reflection because what can be recognised through affect and affection, then, is that we are affected in some way by every experience in a way that extends beyond the body. Ultimately this contributes towards a subjectivity that lasts beyond an experience to in turn affect how we will act in the future.

This was not the first time that Violet had been confronted about the politics of food poverty at Lunch. In Chapter Six, analysis showed that Violet was motivated to volunteer through a combination of theology and politics, but was concerned about how she would come across to those within the host church. To some extent insider/outsider relationships continued to influence teamwork at Lunch. During May half-term Violet's fears were confronted when she met a member of the local congregation who happened to be in the church at the same time as Lunch ran (that is he was not volunteering). Violet recalled this in her diary:

Whilst making the dough an older [local] bloke came into the kitchen and asked what we were doing. I explained about Lunch feeding kids who normally get a free school meal, and the difficulty holidays pose for their parents. To my complete shock, he was utterly disparaging of the parents – they shouldn't be so feckless, why have children if they couldn't feed them, why don't they get rid of their satellite TV, etc. "But we can't judge their situation, we don't know what's happened in their lives", I replied, feeling on the one hand that I really believe in the project and why we're doing it, but at the same time feeling slightly uncomfortable about arguing with one of the locals who no doubt had his own story. "Oh, I know, I'm an old bigot" he said, "but my mother had four of us and she managed after my dad died." "That must have been very difficult" I said. "Yes", he said, "it was, but she kept us fed and clothed without any help." Then he went out with his tray of stuff, leaving me thinking about what it is that makes us react to circumstances in the way we do, and my own family's history... Giving and receiving food is such a powerful symbol – for the self-confessed bigoted bloke today it seemed to remind him of the bitterness of his own childhood, whereas for my grandfather it was a sign of love. I want it to be a sign of love too, and if it makes one child feel more valued and more a part of society, as well as feeding their bodies, then from my perspective Lunch will have done its job.

(Violet, diary, June 2016)

Violet expected prejudice from people outside the local area, but not from a local. She is first shocked at his criticism of the children's parents, and then uncomfortable defending them when she is an 'outsider' and he an 'insider', recognising that he "no doubt had his own story". Violet is initially uncertain how this man has been affected by his past experiences, but learns of the struggle of his childhood, which he relates to feeling parents today should not need help. Violet, in turn, reflects on her grandfather's neglect as a child and the love he later received from strangers. Violet and the man are therefore affected differently in their attitudes to present day poverty through their own family experiences in the past; Violet wants to help, and the man does not, but at the same time calls himself "an old bigot" which implies that he recognises that his views are controversial. For Violet this encounter reaffirms her motivation to volunteer, therefore through her body being challenged, its affective capacity is increased. This encounter (01/06/2016) and change in affective capacity will have then affected her later encounter with new volunteers (01/08/2016), and their "cultural snobbery", but increased her confidence in responding to this. As with my own narrative, Violet's longer term commitment to Lunch impacts upon how she reflects on and interprets situations, both in terms of the understanding she has gained of Lunch, and to what degree what happens matters to her. Her willingness towards Lunch – which extended

from her original motivations as her knowledge and freedom to act grew – therefore changes her affective capacity compared to volunteers who did a limited number of days, or did not place volunteering as a priority and cancelled at short notice.

## 2.2. *Friendship and Care*

Stemming from volunteers working together, over time friendship and a sense of care developed across and within the volunteer group and as volunteers and children got to know each other. This comes across in both my own, and individual volunteer's narratives, whilst also recognising that this would not necessarily have been the case for every volunteer. I begin again with a reflection from Violet's diary – undirected by myself to this topic – on the second holiday that she volunteered.

I think things like Lunch mean we all become more human. Rather than acting like cogs in a machine, we all give, we all receive, and we become a community.

(Violet, diary, October 2015)

For Violet, volunteering at Lunch encourages humanity and makes a difference to each individual, rather than being “like cogs in a machine” where those cogs could have been anyone. For Violet it is from this that “we become a community”. This care and community can be understood in terms of an ethos approach to volunteering (for example see Cloke et al., 2007). How does affect theory speak to this to give us a distinct understanding of what Violet refers to as becoming a community? First, affect theory prioritises the relationality between bodies (B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a) meaning that we can never take one human as an isolated individual. In being a community, then, this is not in a romanticised sense that plays up participation, and plays down conflict (for example as critiqued by Joseph, 2002). Rather, affection gives us an understanding of community where each person is affected by the others that they are acting with at Lunch. This is key to Violet's reflection on Lunch; volunteers are not only giving, but are also being continually changed themselves – affected – by the experiences that they undertake. Affection is therefore equally as significant as affect here because affects are exchanged between volunteers as they “give” and “receive”, and through this volunteers are affected. Secondly, affect theory speaks to Violet reflecting on the community as becoming: by understanding community as how people relate to each other and act together, through *conatus* the body for Spinoza (1996, IIP6) is not static but rather is continually striving to exist. I cannot say this sense of a relational, becoming community would have been the case for everyone, but others did write of similar experiences, for example Alice – an international student who volunteered in the first summer holiday.

I helped with washing up dishes afterwards, with Tony humming and explaining traditional English nursery rhymes and local songs to me in the meanwhile. I love these church people. They are so nice to me and I felt less lonely or isolated.

(Alice, diary, July 2015)

Alice is clearly positively affected by the experience of volunteering in her interactions with other volunteers; “I felt less lonely or isolated”. Through the mundane task of washing up with Tony, Alice unexpectedly learns more about English culture. This was not her motivation for volunteering, but reiterates the point that it is necessary to break down the barrier between giver and receiver in understanding the volunteering experience; both affect and are affected, sometimes surprisingly.

Friendship and care also developed between the volunteers and children. Here there is a comparison to Cloke et al. (2017)’s argument that foodbanks can be spaces of care which I first discussed in Chapter Three. To reiterate, Cloke et al. argue that the foodbank in their research is a space of care because more happens at the foodbank in question than food provision: for example non-food items are also given, service-users are signposted to further services, and there is conversation with service-users in a café-like setting. Care is therefore distinct from provision in that it moves beyond the giving of food to how food is given, what further help is offered, and how relationships can develop. In the same way, Lunch was not simply a mechanism for giving meals, but a space in which relationships of care developed: through the affective interactions between volunteers, and volunteers and children, Lunch became about “more-than” food, which as I established in Chapter Two, an affective approach is well placed to emphasise. Furthermore, emphasising affection as well as affect is significant in understanding Lunch as a space of care. This is because affection emphasises how a body is affected by any interaction, and how the interaction takes place – whether bodies are in common (reiterates common notions and compatibility from Chapter Four) – will be central in how the body is affected (Spinoza, 1996, IIP38; IIP39). Giving implies a uni-directional relationship, whilst affection shows us that no relationship can be uni-directional (Spinoza, 1996, IIdéf3). Ergo, care emphasises that both bodies are affected by their encounter. This therefore builds upon the discussion in Chapter Two that how food is shared – which is impacted upon by the faith ethos of a project – is significant in how to understand the process of volunteering, and the impact of volunteering upon the volunteer. Understanding this is important for volunteers to persist over time, a point I return to subsequently and emphasise in the conclusion, particularly within the recommendations for voluntary sector leaders.

To further explore the development of caring relationships, I return to Tony, a volunteer in his mid-80s from a relatively privileged background who volunteered every holiday. In the second summer holiday he wrote in his diary:



Interesting two attendances almost consecutively. A gang congregated around my dominoes [at a table], gradually learning how to play. We stuck together for lunch where Jonah<sup>5</sup>, excitable and enthusiastic, stuffed so many raw carrots that they regurgitated in spectacular manner.

Then [the next day] the great rewarding moment... in comes Jonah, recognises me, face lights up, rushes over, grabs the dominoes, calls his friends and away we go. Participating in volleyball a mistake. [Eating] lunch – a contrast, Jonah effervescent as always, Joseph slowly plods along and merely nods. Not a word but a smile at the end. It's been a delightful experience. Thank you.

(Tony, diary, August 2016)

The affect theory frame works well here to emphasise the relationality between bodies which I emphasised in Chapter Two (Bailey et al., 2008; B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a; Vannini, 2015a) – how over time Tony developed relationships with the other volunteers and children; their affective exchanges increased his confidence in his capacity to act, in turn increasing his power of acting. This takes reflection beyond Tony as a self-reflecting individual to how Tony is affected by experiences that are beyond himself. Time was therefore important in how Tony was affected, through which his affective capacity increased. Through Tony's writing the impact of Jonah's action and the pleasure he gained from this developing relationship and affective exchange is clear. Tony's enthusiasm and value given to the experience prevailed even through events such as what became known as 'the carrot incident': when five year old Jonah's enthusiasm for carrots resulted in an event that clearly goes against a romanticised notion of volunteering. Although Tony's body was immediately impacted by a loss of appetite during lunch showing the impact of the non-human affective body of the regurgitated carrots, his affective relationship with Jonah overrode the event in the development of their relationship. Again this negates the binary of giver and receiver in the volunteering experience; Tony was volunteering at a project that

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<sup>5</sup> Names of children referred to are changed to pseudonyms

primarily gave Jonah a healthy meal, but through affect and reflection there is a clear impact upon Tony. This account portrays passing moments – playing dominoes and eating lunch – but through affect I am able to understand how these were “more-than” play and food, as Lunch also became a space of care. These moments and Tony’s reflection on them were important in his persistence in action, and his continued involvement fundraising for Lunch even as his health declined and he was physically unable to volunteer. Tony’s continual involvement shows how through being affected, the affects he experienced contributed to the forming of a subjectivity that lasts, and in turn affects, beyond the passing moment.

Overall, volunteers were affected and could be encouraged to continue volunteering through the development of relationships at Lunch, both with each other, and with the children. This negates the binary of giver and receiver in how to understand the volunteering experience because both volunteers and children could be positively affected. However, this is not to romanticise Lunch; there was also tension and moments of unwillingness which all affected individuals, and in turn how Lunch functioned. Each volunteer experienced their own journey in volunteering and as such was uniquely affected, yet each within the context of experiences at Lunch that were relational to other bodies and the growing sense of community.

### **3. Reflecting upon Volunteering**

Volunteers necessarily undertook some degree of ongoing reflection because each holiday they needed to decide if they would volunteer. Reflection could occur both in the moment at Lunch, and afterwards. That I asked volunteers to write about their experiences may have heightened this level of reflection, or at least captured it at different stages. It is important, then, to take diary and interview extracts in the context of the volunteers’ positionality and individual narratives, and it is significant that the majority of volunteers wrote more than one diary entry because this means I can explore their reflections over time and recognise knowledge formation as a process, and to some degree avoid making reflections more concrete than they were intended. Furthermore, affect theory also extends reflection beyond volunteers’ self-reflections. This is because how people were affected by their experiences at Lunch also affected their persistence in volunteering without there necessarily being literal thought reflection on these moments.

I have gained an understanding of affect that is about the power of a body to act (Spinoza, 1996). The question then becomes this: will Lunch volunteers act (as a volunteer) again? Affect emphasises how the body is affected in each moment for its future action. This

section focuses on how volunteers reflected on these experiences. Building upon Chapter Six, this extends my approach to volunteering that moves beyond the pattern of volunteering (Milligan, 2007) to how a person continues to volunteer. From my own and other volunteers' experiences there are three intertwining responses to the question of how a person persists in volunteering, with each as a process of reflection. First, how did people's experiences at Lunch compare to their expectations, and did this positively or negatively affect their affective capacity? Secondly, if fear of the unknown was a concern before volunteering, then what difference did becoming more familiar with Lunch make? And thirdly, what did passing moments with the children mean for how volunteers were affected? To reiterate, analysing these experiences through affect recognises that the affective volunteer body is constantly changing and that passing moments can be as significant as regular routine. Through this I emphasise the complexity of multiple affections on the body; it is perhaps too simplistic to understand affective capacity as purely increasing or decreasing.

### *3.1. How did Expectations Compare to Experiences at Lunch?*

How someone finds the experience of volunteering is important for whether they persist in volunteering (Yanay and Yanay, 2008). Approaching this question through an affect theory frame emphasises how each day at Lunch, volunteers were each affected by their expectation of what the experience would entail. This was the case both before their first day volunteering – affected by preconceptions (what Spinoza (1996, IIP40S) would call imagination) – and afterwards as they and I were affected by previous days at Lunch. Experience could therefore affirm and/or alleviate concerns and preconceptions about Lunch, the volunteers, and the children coming. It took time for the numbers of children attending to grow, not because need was lacking, but because it took time for Lunch to become established and trusted in the local community. Recognising that it is important how people are affected by an experience, I endeavoured to manage new volunteers' expectations before they volunteered and emphasised that a high ratio of adults to children was beneficial for the children. William, a secondary school teacher from outside the local area, volunteered both summer holidays at Lunch. After the second he reflected:



What encouraged me? Well it's clear that kids were having a good time. It was clear that there was a need there, and you know the fact that the numbers have increased and there were people there who had been there the year before it's clear there is a need there, so that acted as an encouragement. ((Pause)) The sense that you were constantly reviewing it and reassessing what you could do better and how you could change things, the structure and organisation has been strong and so from that perspective I also felt I wanted to support the venture and be involved.

(William, interview, September 2016)

William was encouraged to volunteer by multiple intertwining factors: the children's need, their enjoyment, growing numbers of children attending, and my continual reviewing of Lunch. To follow Chapter Four, I could say that William was affected by the prior cause of my reviewing Lunch (Spinoza, 1996, IIP48). This last point is imperative and overlaps with William's interpretation of my own narrative and reflection: I was continually affected by what happened at Lunch for how it could be improved in the future. As Violet earlier reflected, being at Lunch was continual learning process, and here William was affected by my reassessments in a way that increased his capacity to act and encouraged him to volunteer. How I was affected at Lunch and in turn reflected therefore affected William's reflections and moving beyond a focus on himself, to how William perceived Lunch itself. However, he also reflected that had the children's behaviour not improved then it was likely he would not have volunteered again:

"Just because I didn't want to come away feeling drained or because of challenging behaviour. I do enough of that in the day job so I didn't really want to spend my holidays doing that!"

(William, interview, September 2016)

This takes us beyond an ethos understanding of volunteering to recognise the multiple affects influencing William's affective capacity in terms of encouragement and discouragement, and whether he would volunteer again.

It was an ongoing challenge for myself as the co-ordinator, with the help of others, to plan menus that were hot and healthy as per MakeLunch standards, but also something that the children would eat, and ideally, enjoy. Violet was particularly challenged by food in the first summer holiday. Here she reflects on a conversation with Camilla, another cook. This shows both their reflection in the moment at Lunch, and Violet's reflection of their conversation afterwards.



After Camilla & I had been talking about what might be the liberation theology aspects of the project yesterday, reality bit today, and bit quite hard. We did chicken curry which was pretty much universally disliked by the kids and it forced us into facing how disempowering it might feel for them, arriving at the table to find a plate of food there. They'd had no choice about what went onto their plate, and our menus often include stuff that's all mixed in together rather than being served as separate items. They're also getting to know each other, so peer pressure is important and once one says "I don't like..." it's hard for the rest not to follow suit. A big positive was that we have Nora, from [host church], who's worked as a dinner lady at some point and could advise us what might work best – food served to each child separately, letting them choose what goes on their plate, and menus with the ingredients as separate items rather than combined into a sauce. It's a good challenge to my smug and complacent attitudes!

(Violet, diary, August 2015)

When Lunch first started in July 2015 the children sat down for lunch with plates of food already served at the tables. As Violet reflects, this presented a problem if the children did not like the food, particularly when peer pressure could result in a whole table of children rejecting the food. Violet and Camilla reflected on this at two levels: first, practically and reflecting in the moment, that there was a problem for a project aiming to respond to holiday hunger when food was not eaten. Secondly, there is a role of ideas in how Violet and Camilla were affected, and in how they interpreted this as being about more than food as they related it to liberation theology. This presents a very particular interpretation from Chapter Three of the theology of acting through faith in terms of social action. What do Violet and Camilla mean by liberation theology? They later expanded that coming from the theologian Gustavo Gutierrez, it refers to God having a bias for the poor which not only motivated them to work for justice, but also to learn from the poor about the grace of God. Violet added that liberation theology also emphasises theology from praxis, rather than vice

versa. This builds upon Chapter Six where I explored the different end goals that people can perceive through their faith for volunteering. Violet and Camilla's relating Lunch to liberation theology makes it distinct from an aim of volunteering for evangelist conversion. Indeed, they invert the relationship here; they want to learn about God from the people they meet at Lunch, rather than teach others about God. Their discussion shows how volunteers' faith and experiences at Lunch could challenge each other: a faith motivation to volunteer does not make a person immune from being challenged by acting, or finding action difficult. This is crucial to emphasise in how I can understand faith-based volunteering as a process, a point that I return to in the next chapter and in relation to recommendations for voluntary sector leaders to act upon.

Inspired by liberation theology, Violet and Camilla questioned the power children experienced in eating at Lunch, which Camilla added to in her diary: "At the moment it feels quite transactional rather than relational." This gives us a different kind of understanding of how citizenship and social capital can develop through volunteering: rather than countering hedonism (Durkheim's understanding of social capital (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a)), or fostering trust in a social organisation (Putman on citizenship (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a)), this was about challenging the power relations in how Lunch functioned. This presents an example where the role of ideas and theology were explicit in how experience was reflected upon, and on the future action taken (the method of serving food was changed), whereas more often these were implicit at Lunch and in people's reflections. How can an understanding through affect harness the power of these ideas? I need to recognise that whilst bodies are continually formed in the moment, when I understand some ideas and beliefs – such as theology and faith – as affects then they can have a significant, ongoing affection for the affected body. Indeed, in August 2016 Violet wrote a reflection on her experiences at Lunch over the previous twelve months and concluded it had been "a transformational experience." However, what affect also highlights is how different bodies can be affected differently by the same situation (Spinoza, 1996, IIPXIIILIIIAII). Whilst Violet writes enthusiastically about the advice Nora is able to give, making use of her past experience, in her diary from the same day Nora simply wrote "afterwards there was a discussion about the food." Whilst also a Christian, Nora (in her diary) did not relate the situation to liberation theology. For understanding the persistence of volunteering, considering this experience through affect theory therefore emphasises that different bodies are affected and reflect in different ways. Yet, affect theory takes us further than this: how the body is affected by an experience, and how it reflects on that experience – taking reflection beyond itself – and the power of the ideas associated with that experience, is then

formative in the continual development of a faithful subjectivity, and how that subject will next act.

For some volunteers, Lunch was the first time that they had specifically focussed on food poverty. This could provoke reflection, such as for Anna:

Yeah I think it's encouraged me to be more aware about food; not just food poverty but also looking at food richness in my own household and my family. I'm really hot on food waste now, I don't like wasting food, I don't over buy food now. It was something I took for granted until I started to see these families coming and you think gosh I've never had this issue in my life, even as a child myself and for my own family. And yeah just to acknowledge the fact that this is a problem in society it's encouraged me to change my ways massively and try and share my experience as much as I can with others... And then when you explain they go "oh yeah" they have one of those moments of gosh that is a really good thing you are doing.

(Anna, interview, October 2016)

Anna's reflection extends from Lunch to food richness and waste more generally. In particular, she shares that she has reflected on her own family's food shopping practices. This is one of the few narratives that explicitly reflects on the impact of their volunteering on family and friends. Anna was affected by meeting the families at Lunch in a way that made her reflect on the relative food wealth her own family experiences – and has experienced in the past. She further builds on this process of reflection by sharing this experience "as much as I can with others". From this, there were both present and absent figures are involved in the processes of reflection and who are in some way affected by experiences at Lunch. In this extract the others whom Anna shares with about Lunch are affected by "moments of gosh", although Anna relates this back to Lunch being "a really good thing" rather than others in turn changing their food practices. I can also infer the wider impact of Anna's reflection upon her family; her children and husband will also be affected by her new commitment to reducing food waste. This is a further example of reflection occurring beyond the remit of this research, thereby adding to the integrity of building an understanding around motivation, action, and reflection. Furthermore, Anna's reflection shows us how starting with her experiences at Lunch, the resulting affections contribute towards the forming of her subjectivity in a way that extends beyond volunteering and beyond herself, providing a further example to the key theme in the geography of religion explored in Chapter Two that faith is performed throughout a person's daily life, not only in worship spaces.

One further element of reflection that is significant to consider is how the wider Lunch host church reflected on Lunch. How did this compare to what others perceived as the experience of volunteering? Not being a part of the congregation myself, this was difficult to identify because I predominantly met members of the congregation if they were involved with Lunch, whereas not everyone was. One way that I could ascertain this was by asking volunteers at Lunch who were part of the congregation what their impression was of the congregation's reflection on Lunch. Below are two reflections from Sarah and Anna, volunteers who were on the church leadership team.

It's a funny one [the congregation's impression] because we don't get masses of people volunteering... I think everyone is aware of it because we go on and on plugging it ((laughs)), it's always in the newsletter, we always stand up at the front at services asking for volunteers and materials... So I think people are very well aware of it and people like the idea of it. It's probably just getting the volunteers. I'd love to see more the community of [the host church] getting involved...

(Sarah, interview, September 2016)

I'd say 80% [actually 70%] of our volunteer base is from outside this church and that saddens me slightly. ...now I'm in it [Lunch] and I can see how wonderful it is I just try and share that with the congregation and that's all I try to do. I think up till now they've been quite sheltered from it. I don't think we've shouted from the rooftops enough about it. It's been a huge success and it's been held here in this church building, and I don't think enough is said about it, I think this is one of the main biggest projects that this church actually does.

(Anna, interview, October 2016)

In undertaking participatory research, as I reflected in Chapter Five, I endeavoured to establish and run the project with the local community. This was successful in terms of key church leadership figures and with over twenty volunteers who were from the host church. However, in terms of the wider congregation I largely relied upon those who volunteered at Lunch and were in the congregation to share about Lunch. People's reflections on Lunch from within the host church congregation will have varied within the congregation, and over time. Sarah reflected on this as largely being successful, judging success in terms of people's awareness of Lunch. However, at similar points in time to Sarah, Anna reflects on the congregation's lack of awareness of Lunch and question if people's perceptions of who attends Lunch were accurate. However, it is difficult to report on these reflections concretely without my having spoken to members of the congregation who were not involved in Lunch. What I can take from Anna's reflection is the importance of sharing with all stakeholders –

including the wider congregation – about Lunch. There were attempts to do this, as Sarah emphasises, but taking it further to sharing about experiences at Lunch would give the potential to increase people in the congregation's knowledge about Lunch; to move from Spinoza's (1996, IIP40S) lowest form of knowledge, imagination, towards knowledge more grounded in experience. This then could have changed how people were affected by their knowledge of Lunch, endeavouring to further increase the congregation's support. This follows other volunteers' reflections that their imagined knowledge of Lunch did not necessarily compare accurately to experiences at Lunch.

### 3.2. *Familiarity and Increasing Affective Capacity?*

Chapter Six explored volunteers' anxiety at the unknown before volunteering. Building upon the comparison between expectations and experiences at Lunch, what was the affect when the volunteering environment became familiar? Did this increase volunteers' affective capacities and the likelihood they would volunteer again? Clearly this is not a quantitative test with a definitive answer, but these are important questions in relation to volunteers' capacity to reflect – and their subsequent persistence in acting.

Familiarity and routine were significant to Amelia – who this analysis first met in Chapter Six, and who joined the host church congregation as a result of volunteering at Lunch.



So I've got to know lots of the volunteers, got to know the children and their families, it's good to be recognised and able to recognise them when they come back. And there's an easiness if you know what it's going to be every day, how it's going to work ((both laugh)) – within limits – but what's supposed to happen and also what's expected of you as a volunteer. And also what to expect of the children within a range. Yeah.

(Amelia, interview, September 2016)

Amelia refers to “an easiness if you know what it's going to be every day” which mirrors positively people's anxiety about the fear of the unknown before volunteering. Both Amelia and other volunteers' accounts reflect this anxiety easing once the unknown becomes a known. However, Amelia and I laugh together mid-point in the extract, and Amelia adds “within limits” to her statement that she knows what will happen each day. Here our narratives overlap as we recognise the unpredictability of Lunch, both in terms of the cooking and working with children. This is not to say every day volunteering was momentous;

volunteering and running Lunch also emphasised the mundane, and repetitive action: peeling potatoes, moving tables and chairs, food shopping. The existence of Lunch relied upon the continuation of these activities amongst the passing moments which also affected volunteers. Over time Lunch had an established timetable and routine, but Amelia and I recognised that one could never know exactly what would happen; affects are potential and remain unknown until the moment they become the past. However, as bodies became familiar with the environment, they were affected by past experiences and they and I therefore became better equipped – our affective capacities changed – with how we could deal with different situations. In this way Amelia's extract extends beyond self-reflection to a sense of being at Lunch, and affections from continually being in that space.

As I became more familiar with what to expect each day at Lunch, I shared the routine and common anxiety points with new volunteers in an attempt to try and increase their capacity to act and reduce the unknown before they volunteered. In this way, I endeavoured to move volunteers from Spinoza's (1996, IIP40S) lowest form of knowledge – imagination – towards knowledge based on experience and reason. I also applied this logic for regular volunteers who through their diary entries, I already knew experienced anxiety: for example, Nora, who in Chapter Six was anxious about relations in the cooking team. In September 2015 I was disappointed when I received Nora's diary from the summer that I had not realised she had been anxious, and this affected me in wanting to rectify this in the future as our narratives overlapped.

Nora said her third daughter would also like to help in the kitchen which I'm really pleased about – Nora always seems rather anxious and nervous from her diaries so I am relieved each time she says she will come again as that makes me feel it can't have been that bad! As Nora is one of the few from the host church who does the cooking it is important to me that she enjoys Lunch and views it positively. To try and help her be less anxious this time I explained in my email to her who would be on the cooking team and if she could lead as she is most experienced on the Monday, then joint leadership on the Thursday.

(My diary, April 2016)

Nora's anxiety was not explicit in person when she volunteered, but as I reflected in Chapter Six, it was clear from her diary writing. Her third daughter wanting to volunteer in Easter 2016 – by when, as shown below, Nora was enjoying volunteering, and two of Nora's other daughters were already volunteering – implies a level of reflection and sharing in their household about Lunch, and beyond the remit of this research. Focussing upon the ease of



volunteering from familiarity, I can match my narrative with Nora's own diary following the Easter holidays and my efforts to ease her anxiety.

Before Lunch today was the most relaxed I have been. I knew the routine and most of the people so no longer felt nervous. It felt just like going to work, or out to meet friends.

(Nora, diary, April 2016)

Nine months after her first diary with anxiety of volunteering, Nora is more comfortable and "no longer felt nervous" which she assigns to knowing the routine and the other volunteers. The 'outsiders', such as Violet, whom she was nervous to meet have now become friends. Her past experiences are therefore a positive affection upon her affective capacity and increase her power to act without anxiety because of the knowledge she has gained.

### 3.3. *Reflecting on Moments with the Children*

Throughout the analysis so far I have highlighted the affect on volunteers of moments with the children at Lunch. Overlapping with the previous sections, here I draw out specific moments with the children that volunteers reflected upon. Through this I reiterate the benefit of an analysis through affect theory which prioritises the "not always" as much as routine (Dewsbury, 2010b, 323), in order to fully emphasise the importance of passing moments with the children in volunteers' reflections on Lunch and whether they would persist in volunteering. James, a volunteer from the host church, phrases this fittingly:



There will be sometimes when you'll feel really down because of how the kids have been, and there will be times when you feel really encouraged because of how the kids have been, and there will be times when you've been tired and they've sent you down and they'll be times when you're tired and they've raised you up. That's a variable.

(James, interview, August 2016)

Recognising that within affect theory and non-representational theories bodies are relational (Bailey et al., 2008; B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a; Vannini, 2015a), the children's behaviour could both encourage and discourage volunteers. At times this could result in an affective atmosphere at Lunch; disappointment after some boys flooded the toilets, but



elation (and relief) at thirty children eating pizzas that they had made themselves at Lunch. Such atmospheres affected volunteers, but were beyond the subject and were transient (B. Anderson, 2014). However, part of an atmosphere's transiency is in its reliance upon bodies to exist (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2013; 2016), and so with a different mix of volunteers and children, or a different activity at Lunch, or simply a moment later, the atmosphere could dissipate and change. Therefore, whilst an atmosphere is beyond the subject, how volunteers engaged with each other and the children was also important for how Lunch functioned. James recognises that his affective capacity affected how he approached a situation, and that the children could change this capacity positively and negatively as they "sent you down", or "raised you up". Passing moments are important, then, in that they can significantly change a body's affective capacity, which in turn affects how the next passing moment is approached and dealt with. This reiterates from Chapter Two the importance of affection – how the body is affected (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3) – in how the body can next act, rather than affect theory focussing primarily on affect. James came from a context of being relatively familiar with church youth work, and from my observation – and that fact he still volunteered at multiple youth groups – had become relatively resilient to the variable nature of the children's behaviour. For a new volunteer not used to this context, their affective capacity in terms of whether they would volunteer again could be cut short by passing moments. For example, Alexandra encountered and cleared up two flooded bathrooms and a corridor on her second day volunteering after some children blocked the sink with a towel, apparently on purpose. In her diary Alexandra reflected that she was disappointed in the children's behaviour, and although she related it to being important Lunch provided potentially impressionable characters with a safe place to play, she did not volunteer again.

Returning to Violet, moments with the children at meal times took on a theological dimension for her, both in the moment and in reflecting afterwards.



Great to see the children developing – one used a knife & fork for the first time to cut up her own dinner, another tried something new, and another helped bring the dirty plates back into the kitchen. It felt like family life rather than an institution, and that makes all the difference, I think – a real foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

(Violet, diary, October 2015)

First, Violet is encouraged as a cook to see the children enjoying the food and developing throughout their time at Lunch. But the second line is poignant. Violet reflects on these

moments not just as eating together, but beyond herself, and indeed beyond this world as “a real foretaste of the heavenly banquet”; to her Christian belief in eternal life. To another person this could have been a secular setting around food, but to Violet, the meaning is changed by the role of faith in her daily life and how she reflects upon this – a reflection with significance to her beyond any research remit. In this way, the research clearly contributes to how to understand performances of faith in people’s lives, and beyond worship spaces. Indeed, Violet commented that writing her diary after each day at Lunch formed a theological process and reflection for her. This is one example where the research remit did encourage volunteers to capture their reflections, but reflections did not take place purely for research purposes, and events took on a meaning that was “more-than” the action itself for volunteers, reiterating the benefit of an affective approach to faith-based research. Violet’s extract here builds upon others from her diary to build the sense of the importance she gives to Lunch – including eating together, a developing sense of community, and mirroring Biblical teachings – in a way that extends beyond herself and her own self-reflection to encourage her persistence in volunteering.

I end this section with an extract from my own diary where I reflected on Lunch whilst supervising the children being collected on my last day of running Lunch:



Before I knew it, it was time for the parents to collect the children. I stood at the main door to see everyone out and parents often said thank you as they left... One of the eleven year-old girls, Holly, hadn’t come – turned out she’d been to the doctors, but arrived with takeaway chips to pick up her younger sister. To me her small figure with chips arriving with the other Mums epitomised why Lunch is needed - because she hadn’t come it seemed she hadn’t had a proper or nutritious lunch.

(My diary, August 2016)

Different situations made impressions upon different volunteers. I witnessed yet cannot recall all of the others’ vignettes, but other events have affected me such as seeing one of the girls I had expected to be at Lunch instead collecting her younger sister, and eating chips for lunch. At Lunch I predominantly focussed on being the project co-ordinator, rather than thinking about research questions, and reflection occurred afterwards when I wrote my diary.

Yet, in the above passing moment I was struck (again) immediately by the importance of Lunch responding to holiday hunger when Holly had missed eating at Lunch for a doctor's appointment, and therefore missed having a healthy lunch. I accept that I am making a judgement about what is suitable for lunch, judging chips as inadequate, but Holly's absence at Lunch, and her presence afterwards affected me in reaffirming in a personal circumstance, the need for Lunch. However, can I say that this affirmation increased my capacity to act? Not in the sense of volunteering as I did not return to Lunch, feeling as others have (for example Garthwaite, 2016, as discussed in Chapter Five) that I needed to be removed from the direct context to be able to reflect more fully and write a thesis, although in line with an action research and participatory ethos I did continue to support the new Lunch leaders after our handover. Therefore, I could say my power to act was increased by then remaining involved with the work of MakeLunch, and wanting to secure the future for this particular project with a successful handover.

Overall, reflection occurred in the moment, afterwards in interviews and diaries, and also through how people were affected by their experiences. How expectations compared to reality was important in people's developing sense of Lunch, and volunteering became easier as routines were established and the experiences became more familiar although never entirely predictable. Affections and changes in affective capacity can therefore be uncertain in the moment, but become more apparent to the affected body over time. Different moments are significant in different ways to different people, but add together to form an overall picture of Lunch both in this writing and in impressions that are passed on to others.

#### **4. Re-igniting Affective Motivations**

The third theme of this chapter brings together the volunteer being affected by experience and varying forms of reflection, with the need for motivations (in themselves affects) to be constantly re-ignited if they are to continue volunteering; something needs to add up to a person agreeing, or wanting to volunteer again. To emphasise this further: by its very nature, no action of volunteering is guaranteed. As I reflected with Amelia at the beginning of this chapter, even with a strong faith motivation to volunteer, it is crucial that this does not prevent a person from being challenged or deterred by their experience. There will be other projects that meet the same motivation to volunteer, should a person's experience not be enjoyable, or to some extent rewarding. With this in mind, I reiterate that people volunteered for each individual holiday at Lunch; volunteering again was not an automatic process or long term commitment.

Taking this into consideration, first, I explore how, for both myself and other volunteers, motivations needed to be continually renewed for action to persist. With a focus at Lunch on the children and food, the role of ideas, particularly faith related/theological, is often implicit although it is significant to note, that as observed earlier in the liberation theology discussion, ideas could also become explicit. Secondly, what difference does a sense of achievement and recognition by others make to motivations being re-ignited? Finally, I return to the hope that volunteers had before volunteering - that it would be enjoyable - to find actualised the importance of enjoyment in the volunteering experience – and note how this alters the development of volunteers' original motivations. Through this the importance of volunteers (including myself) actively engaging with affections to increase their/my power to act, and ultimately persist in volunteering, is emphasised.

A prerequisite question: did volunteers experience a sense of duty – or a moral obligation – to volunteer again? Did my personal connection with some of the volunteers affect them in a way that made them more likely to volunteer? I explored in Chapter Four that a moral obligation must be possible for a person to do (B. Williams, 1981); it must be within their affective capacity (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3). To some extent this discounts volunteers who did not have enough time to volunteer due to work, although others choose to rearrange their working day to make time to volunteer. Both diaries and interviews suggest that my knowing some volunteers outside of Lunch did affect them in volunteering, and perhaps make them more likely to respond positively to a request to volunteer again if I needed more volunteers. However, others did turn down volunteering – either entirely – or for specific holidays, for example those who were teachers did not want to volunteer in half-term holidays. Indeed, volunteering from a sense of duty was not a popular association, with some interviewees seeing this as an affront to the genuineness of their faith motivations. This mirrors the findings of Cloke et al. (2007, 1095) who interviewed volunteers responding to homelessness in the England: “interviews regularly distinguished between volunteering because they *wanted to* rather than because they felt *obliged to*.” There was more, then, to the persistence of action than a compulsion to volunteer; it was not a predetermined activity, but rather other factors came together to affect the volunteer to act – and to continue acting. This raises questions for the implications for affect, will and freedom. Through the multiple ways they are affected, are volunteers determined to persist in volunteering (or not)? What is the role of the volunteer in how they are affected? How do longer term, powerful ideas of faith and determination interact with these? These questions are crucial if research is to move beyond the patterns of people volunteering in the UK to how it is that people volunteer, and persist in volunteering. To reiterate, this move is essential if voluntary groups are to be

sustainable over time in the complex context of the retracting welfare state (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004).

#### 4.1. *Continually Renewing Motivations*

As one school holiday ended, planning for the next holiday's Lunch began almost immediately. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, it was never guaranteed that Lunch could open because there was always a question of having enough resources – particularly enough volunteers. In early October 2015, after the first summer holiday, I reflected on the approaching half-term.

I am so determined that Lunch happens and is a success this October half-term. I have 26 days for this to happen. The main thing at the moment is having enough volunteers... I have prayed to God and asked others to too that we will have enough volunteers. However, I don't believe I can just sit back and wait for an answer to this prayer; I need to put in the effort so that people know about Lunch.

(My diary, October 2015)

This is a diary entry that could have been written in the weeks leading up to most of the holidays when I ran Lunch. My determination that enough volunteers would be found was key to the successful planning of each Lunch; success meaning that Lunch could function. This could be considered part of my affective capacity and conatus around my power to act (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3; IIIP6). However, it was also a display of will when circumstances suggested that there would not be enough volunteers and I persevered, and did not take not opening as an option. This reiterates from the introduction to this chapter the distinction between conatus persevering in existence (Spinoza, 1996, IIIP6), and persevering in a particular action; in this instance a will to continuing to run Lunch and have enough volunteers. Is this will more than an affect? It is an affect in that it motivated action and affected my power to act. However, much like faith, this will is a continuous part of my personality in that it affects multiple, if not every, aspect of my life and actions, rather than affecting a momentarily passing capacity to act. Again, as with faith, I can usefully understand this will as an affect in that I was affected by the past, motivated towards the future, and in turn affected others. However, the significance of this determination and its role in my continually developing subjectivity must not be underweighted. Secondly, from this illustration I can make a point between my will and the role of prayer. I (and others) prayed that there would be enough volunteers, but this did not make action to recruit volunteers obsolete. Hence, one notion that this extract raises is my and other volunteers' belief in the power of prayer through the possibility of God answering prayer. This reiterates from Chapter Six the affective power of God. I willed for this affective power to intervene in

my experience of Lunch, but could not control what the result of this – the affection – would be. Theological assertions aside, the point here is that understanding this through affect theory emphasises how I understood both prayer and will as working together to affect people to volunteer. My will overlaps with other volunteers' narratives and a will to persevere, for example Violet who frequently revisited in her diary the topic of politics as a motivation to volunteer. Her experiences reaffirmed this motivation, and provided further ammunition to her motivation to respond to injustice.

#### 4.2. *The Importance of Achievement, Recognition, and Enjoyment*

How other volunteers and I felt after a day at Lunch amounts to how we were immediately affected by the experience. Charlotte, one of the cooks, wrote in her diary:



Every day I came home feeling I had done something tangible - a meal. Such a sense of achievement.

(Charlotte, diary, August 2015)

As a priest at another church in different area, Charlotte was motivated to volunteer by her faith, social justice, and wanting to build links between the churches, as well as by her enjoyment of cooking. The tangibility of cooking the meal was significant in how Charlotte was affected. In focussing on the food, I could interpret this as contrary to a non-representational “more-than” understanding of experience. However, whilst the tangibility of the food is significant to Charlotte – which she subsequently contrasts in an interview to the relatively abstract experience of writing a sermon – it is how she is affected by this which is significant to understand the persistence of action. Charlotte is affected with “a sense of achievement” from cooking the meal. This sense extends beyond her own self-reflection by virtue of it being an affection from the experience of cooking at Lunch. She reflects on being affected in the moment in this way every day that she volunteered, meaning that I can understand this combination of tangibility and achievement as important in positively affecting Charlotte for future action at Lunch. Overlapping between volunteers' and my own narratives, I was also encouraged to persist by achievements at Lunch, for example when the Health Inspector gave Lunch a five star hygiene rating, against all of our expectations from operating in an ageing, at-capacity kitchen. Just as the children's behaviour could encourage and discourage – positively and negatively affect – so could a sense of achievement encourage and give an affection to motivate persistence of action.

However, a lack of a sense of achievement, or a feeling of a lack of recognition of this beyond the individual, could also negatively affect volunteers and their persistence in acting.

Nora, the cook from the host church who in Chapter Six was anxious about working with an unknown leader, added to her narrative after her first day at Lunch:

I needn't have worried about the leader [for the first day] she was lovely, but she was not good at delegating so she just got on and did everything while we watched. We did try to help but generally I just felt useless.

(Nora, diary, July 2015)

I have analysed Nora's narrative thematically rather than chronologically and so, recognising that knowledge formation is a process, I already shared that nine months later Nora considered the cooking leader as a friend, and took on a role of leading the cooking team herself. However, on her first day Nora did not feel that they worked well together and was negatively affected by this; "I just felt useless". The subsequent diary entries when Nora volunteered three more times in summer 2015 show a progression of her involvement in the kitchen, and that it took time for people to learn how each other liked to work, and how to work together. Over time people's affective capacities increased as a result of the affects exchanged between each other, and the resulting affections, but why did Nora persist after an unhappy experience? First, Nora subsequently wrote in her diary entries about her commitment to the children experiencing hunger, and shared that she "was a 'not well off' mother not that long ago". Secondly, that she had already committed to volunteering three times more is perhaps significant in her persistence of action in summer 2015. Thirdly, the developing of relationships, familiarity, and enthusiasm from her teenage children volunteering added together to the persistence of action in the longer term. Nora and I did not know each other before she volunteered so it is less likely that she felt a personal duty to me to volunteer. Rather, Nora's commitment both to helping the children, and to Lunch on the days she had volunteered for were therefore significant enough affective motivations to override the negative affections on her first day.

Nora was not the only one who did not always feel appreciated or valued. Revisiting an extract from Chapter Five, in June 2015, one month before Lunch opened for the first time I wrote:

I felt like I could have walked away from the project as I am fed up with it and trying to work with people who I feel don't treat me fairly back. However, I want to make a difference to the children in the holidays and help them not be hungry, and as a Christian I don't feel that I could actually just walk away.

(My diary, June 2015)

At various points as I established and ran Lunch I experienced challenging relations with some of the church leadership team, and did not always feel my work was appreciated. I

was therefore at times negatively affected by the interactions between us. In June 2015, in terms of a doctoral thesis, I could have changed to a different food poverty project or area. However, similarly to Nora, other motivations meant that these interactions did not decrease my affective capacity to such a degree that I would not persist in acting. Most notably, my Christian faith motivated me to continue establishing and run Lunch: “as a Christian I don’t feel that I could actually just walk away.” Much like Nora, this was because I had made a commitment to responding to holiday hunger for the children in that area, and in line with the action research approach explored in Chapter Five, the project had become more than a piece of doctoral fieldwork. Ergo, my faith affected me in a way that resulted in the persistence of action. How, then, does this relate to will? I can respond to this question by building upon Chapter Four’s discussion of Spinoza and Augustine. I could say that my will was reduced because I felt I had no choice but to persevere. This consideration of will follows the discussion of Augustine and moral obligation: whilst the will is central to human existence for Augustine (2006b), if faith leaves a person feeling obliged to act – particularly to respond to another’s suffering (Augustine, 1958; Lewis, 1996) – then the freedom of that will is questionable. In turn, I reiterate that for Spinoza (1996, IIP48; VP45D) the key consideration for will is whether a person is aware of the prior causes through which they act. If unaware, then this is what Spinoza (1996; VP45D) calls acting through ignorance rather than will. However, my faith also increased my will to act: “I *want* to make a difference to the children”. In this way I can understand that I chose to act on faith as a prior cause of acting, thereby combining Augustine’s will and Spinoza’s need for awareness of causes. I find, then, that faith was an ongoing affect which not only motivated myself – and others – to act, but also to persevere in action. The persistence of action is therefore about more than single affections or a simple increase and decrease in affective capacity.

From both my own and volunteers’ narratives, as well as achievement and recognition, enjoyment was also important for the persistence of action. Charlotte, the priest who felt achievement at the tangible making of a meal, reflected on the importance of enjoyment when I asked her if Lunch had been what she expected.

I didn’t think it would be so enjoyable! Which is actually always a really really good thing... You can do a thing out of a sense of duty but unless your heart is just really engaged and you are enjoying it you will just burn out.

(Charlotte, interview, March 2016)

Charlotte found volunteering at Lunch more enjoyable than she had expected, although she does not say she expected it to be *unenjoyable*. Simply put, Charlotte was positively affected by the volunteering experience which increased her capacity to return to volunteer



again. However, what is more significant here is the contrast Charlotte makes between enjoyment and duty. Although she did not associate with this herself earlier in the interview, Charlotte realises that a person could volunteer through a sense of duty which links to the discussion in Chapter Four, continued above, on will and moral obligation (Augustine, 1964; B. Williams, 1981). Charlotte presents duty as something that can mean a person “burn[s] out” as a volunteer; the effort becomes too much to maintain volunteering. However, Charlotte places enjoyment in comparison, or in addition, to duty by understanding it as the experience adding to a person’s motivation to volunteer, and ultimately to facilitate the persistence of their acting. This is a familiar narrative across different volunteers’ experiences; often their motivation to volunteer in terms of their faith did not specifically change, but rather over time was added to through their experiences at Lunch.

This is not to romanticise the volunteering experience; there were also moments of tension and negativity. Rather, different passing moments and balances of positivity and negativity add together to create each volunteers’ individual, continually developing narrative, and whether they would persist in therefore volunteering or not. These affections take reflection beyond the volunteer to factors that are beyond themselves. However, it is how the volunteer then engages with each of these affections which is crucial for whether they will persist in acting.

## **5. Conclusions**

In this chapter I have moved beyond how people started to volunteer to question how they persisted in volunteering. This responded to the outstanding research questions: “How do we have the capacity and will to reflect upon our actions?” and “How is there an impact of having acted and reflected upon the persistence of action?” It is pertinent to remember that people signed up to volunteer for each individual holiday; formal commitment was short term, meaning reflection on the question of whether to volunteer again was heightened. In conclusion, the persistence of action for both volunteers and myself can be understood as a continual process of motivation, action and reflection in which people are affected by their volunteering experiences, reflect on their motivations, and must re-ignite their motivations to persist in volunteering.

I have explored reflection and persistence of action through three themes within volunteers’ journeys: developing relationships, reflection, and re-igniting motivations. Throughout these themes the analysis has engaged with reflection and persistence in action at two levels. First, there are people’s reflections on their experiences at Lunch, captured in their diaries

and interviews which I analyse through affect theory. Secondly, in affect theory, affect and affection are related to the body, but are beyond the body (the volunteer). Therefore, through affect and affection, affect theory takes the analysis to a further level of reflection that is beyond the subject in how volunteers were affected and changed by their experiences, as this in turn affected their persistence in volunteering.

When people are increasingly relying upon volunteers for welfare provision, particularly in responding to food poverty as explored in Chapter Three, then it is crucial that leaders in the voluntary sector understand how people persist in volunteering – this chapter is followed in the next with a policy briefing. Each volunteer is an individual, approaching each moment with a distinct affective capacity – which is affected by their positionality – and therefore each volunteer experienced Lunch differently and was affected uniquely. However, an approach through affect theory emphasises that bodies are relational. Therefore, whilst each volunteer – including myself – had their own experiences and narratives, these were formed with other bodies, and narratives crossover and relate to each other at different times. This includes how I, as the researcher, have interpreted the meaning of others' narratives. Our shared religious positionality will at times have facilitated this, as has recognising individual extracts within longer volunteering contexts. It is in this context that I include the collective nature of affect, rather than other approaches, for example through endeavouring to name specific affective atmospheres.

The first theme of this chapter explored volunteers' developing relationships. In each experience at Lunch, volunteers were affected by other volunteers and the children, and this changed their affective capacities for future action. The group of volunteers varied daily, so affects exchanged and relationships established between volunteers were important in forming a sense of team. Volunteers' common aim of responding to hunger, and the shared faith of many was a point of commonality, but relationships were also affected by people's changing positionalities, their preconceptions of poverty, and their willingness or unwillingness to work together. Spinoza's three forms of knowledge (1996, IIP40S) helps us to understand how a person is affected by their experience at Lunch, for example in gaining knowledge about food poverty and questioning how it should be responded to. As in Chapter Six, this is a way that the research contributes directly to affect theory by showing the importance of framing Spinoza's affect theory within his wider conceptualisation of *Ethics*. Crucially for this analysis of volunteering, for Spinoza the more an affect is understood, the more that power can be gained from it (1996, VP3C) and therefore the more a person can act in the future according to their own decision making and will.

Within relationships, friendship and care developing between volunteers and with the children were also significant in how volunteers were affected – and whether they would volunteer again. Affection is therefore as important as affect here because volunteers were affected by every experience at Lunch in the forming of a religious subjectivity that lasts beyond the moment. Affect theory hence takes the analysis beyond subjects' reflections for persisting in action by showing that how they are affected – an affection being beyond the body – is important for persistence. I discussed in Chapter Six how Lunch is an example for the geography of religion of the relevance of faith groups in society through welfare provision. Here I can take this further: faith made a difference to how Lunch functioned, taking it from provision and a uni-directional relationship of food from the volunteer to the child, to care between volunteers and children. For the geography of religion, then, this research contributes not only to showing the relevance of faith-based organisations in society, but the difference that they make to how welfare provision is carried out. An approach through affect theory is therefore advantageous to give an understanding of Lunch that is about “more-than” the literal provision of food. Such an approach takes us beyond an analysis of volunteering in an organisational sense, or a means to foster social capital or citizenship, to the meaning that experiences at Lunch held for volunteers, and how volunteers and children were both affected by Lunch rather than only the traditional ‘recipient’. It is this meaning that voluntary sector leaders need to comprehend and respond to in order to gain a volunteers' longer term support.

Secondly, there are processes of reflection for volunteers and myself, both during volunteering and afterwards. How people's preconceptions compared to their experiences of volunteering at Lunch were important in how they would reflect on volunteering again. Building upon reflections, volunteering could become easier over time as the fear of the unknown – framed here through imagination as Spinoza's lowest form of knowledge – became replaced by affections from past experiences and expectation of routine. This is not to romanticise the volunteering experience. Rather, faith and action could also challenge each other, for example in how the food was served, resulting in affections that contributed towards a cumulative subjectivity that extends beyond the body and continues beyond the immediate experience and reflects on how to act in the future. In the process of volunteering, we were affected by moments with the children which could both encourage and discourage future volunteering. In understanding bodies as relational, affect theory prioritises an understanding of the volunteer in relation to others, negating the binary of a giver and receiver in volunteering. However, it is perhaps too simplistic to refer to cumulative experiences and moments at Lunch increasing or decreasing a volunteer's power to act. Affect and affection are more subtle than this; passing moments are also crucial and

could have a lasting impact upon how volunteers reflect upon, and give meaning to their experience. This reiterates the research's contribution to affect theory in emphasising an analysis that places importance upon affection, affective capacity and conatus, as well as affect. In this way affect theory extends reflection beyond the subject – the volunteer – because how they are affected by experience is significant for persistence in action. Here, then, for understanding persistence in volunteering, affect theory also shows that it is not the duration of an experience which makes it significant in the degree to which the body is affected. Rather, different moments affect people differently – and take on a significance which contributes to the cycle of action and reflection for a volunteer to persist over time. It is how volunteers process this culmination of affects and affection that is important because if they become more aware of the prior causes under which they are acting, then they can increase their freedom in acting in the future. Volunteers are then no longer acting with an illusion of why they are acting, but rather recognising the different conditions that come together to motivate present actions as well as actions into the future.

The third theme of this chapter emphasised how motivations need to be continually re-ignited if a person is to continue volunteering: persistence in volunteering is not guaranteed. As with faith as a motivation in Chapter Six, the power of ideas in re-igniting motivations is significant here, but could be implicit in volunteers' reflections. The question of will is imperative, then, in how motivations are re-ignited. Will can be extrapolated as a determination to persist. Then, when a will to succeed is a part of a person's personality, this is an affect, but of a continuous nature rather than a passing moment. There is a distinction here between a desire to persist in volunteering, and conatus as the desire to persist in existence. This is because if a person is negatively affected by their experience volunteering – for example, in a lack of recognition of their efforts – then a desire to volunteer is not necessarily synonymous with conatus. To Spinoza (1996, IIP6) this would be problematic because conatus would take priority over any other action. However, the power of faith as an affect is significant here in how it can affect a person to persist in volunteering, despite being negatively affected by their experiences. Building upon Chapter Four, this raises a question on the relationship between faith and will if a person feels morally obliged by their faith to persist in volunteering. Yet, how a person engages with the affection from faith is crucial, because through this a person can recognise affects, reflect on these, and make a decision on their persistence in volunteering. To some extent this bridges the different modes of reflection as a person reflects on affections that ultimately are beyond them. Finally, enjoyment was also important in encouraging a volunteer to sustain their experience; if the experience was entirely negative it is questionable how long the power of faith as a motivation would be sustainable. Faith does not make a person immune

to being challenged by their experiences, and there are other projects to meet their motivations should the experience be overwhelmingly negative. In this way the research contributes to how to understand people's performances of faith in their daily lives in the geography of religion: highlighting the complexity and diversity of these performances, and how acting can challenge faith and a person's developing and lasting subjectivity. This reiterates the need for voluntary sector leaders to understand how people are motivated to volunteer, and how they persist in volunteering, which I now bring together in the final chapter.



## Chapter Eight: Conclusions

### 1. Introduction

How people start and persist in volunteering is important to understand in a context where the voluntary sector, and faith groups in particular, are playing a vital role in UK welfare provision. Volunteers' persistence is particularly important to understand if voluntary groups' welfare provision is to be sustainable. A central tenet of the research has been to question the role of Christian faith in motivating people to volunteer, and to persist in volunteering. The uniqueness has been to unpack how we can understand action through affect theory. In this, faith and affect have been thought through each other to interrogate how humans will and have the capacity to act. To achieve this, action and persistence have been empirically captured through my experiences and that of Christian volunteers at Lunch in responding to children's holiday hunger. What is clear is that volunteers' faith was significant in motivating volunteering, but motivations must be continually re-ignited to avoid in-action.

Three outcomes are clearly significant. First, through affect theory, research can go beyond understanding faith as a social construct by highlighting how by virtue of volunteers' faith, volunteering can hold more meaning than what is represented in the action of giving food. Secondly, in the conceptual emphasis upon affection, new nuances of reflecting can be discerned and the role of human will challenged. This is because through experience volunteers are themselves changed by affections, and this affects their future persistence in action. Thirdly, the combination of affect and affection therefore portrays how there is a continual cycle of motivation, action and reflection in volunteers' persistence.

After summarising each thesis chapter, I will emphasise the research implications under four themes: questioning humans' capacity and will to act; the conditions under which faithful subjects act; performances of faith; and persistence in volunteering. Through these four themes, I will reflect on how the research has addressed its central aim to think faith and affect through each other, in order to question how humans will and have a capacity to act, specifically in the context of people volunteering to respond to holiday hunger. Finally, I will address future directions for this research; namely multi-faith responses to food poverty, and inclusion and exclusion of volunteers and service-users in food poverty responses.

In *Chapter One* I contextualised the research within wider literature on volunteering, and in particular within the specific frame of focussing upon Christian volunteers in the UK responding to food poverty. In *Chapter Two* I framed affect theory within non-

representational theories and then specifically focussed upon affect theory through Spinoza. This emphasised affect, affection and affective capacity as distinct concepts to be engaged with in this research. I also explicated two key themes in the geography of religion which this research contributes towards: performance of faith in people's daily lives, and the role of faith in society. Here I began to explore how affect theory can be used for faith-based research, in particular to understand how faith can result in an action having more meaning than what is represented in that action.

In *Chapter Three* I first analysed how food poverty is rising in the UK, both as an occurrence in people's lives, and as a political contestation. The empirical focus of this research, holiday hunger, is one dimension of food poverty when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays. Secondly, in *Chapter Three* I built up an understanding of faith and religion for this research: faith as a personal relationship between an individual and God, and religion in an institutional sense of the main world religions. It is important here that being personal means that each people's faith is distinct. These two themes were then brought together through faith-based organisations. I have argued that faith-based organisations are varied in their composition both between each other and over time but are increasingly important for UK welfare provision. What the combination of faith as action and attention to faith-based organisations does is to present a specific way in which a person can act out their faith in their daily lives; action that this research engages with.

In order for this research to fully utilise an affect theory approach for faith-based research, *Chapter Four* turned to a demanding tension: How, through affect theory, does the body come to act? By discussing will and action through Spinoza and Augustine, I concluded that affect and will together mean that the body is impacted by the past, and in turn affected for future action. Therefore both affect and affection are important, as is how the body engages with affections because this is how the body can increase its power to act. I continued to deliberate over this tension in *Chapters Six and Seven*, and I now draw out further implications in section two below. Drawing the discussion on affect, faith and will together for the analysis to come, *Chapter Four* concluded with five insights from affect theory for faith-based research:

1. It heightens the ontological status of faith in research by recognising the power of faith to motivate action;
2. It raises the dimension of faith-motivated social action that is "more-than" what is represented in that action;
3. It can make use of shared religious positionality in how I can interpret shared affects and affections;



4. It raises awareness of the impact on the volunteer by prioritising affection as much as affect;
5. It gives an understanding of volunteering as a process through the process of affect and affection.

*Chapter Five* addressed the combination of action research, participatory geographies, ethnography, and affect theory in this research. Central to the methodology is meeting the theory of action with the practicing of action as I established and ran Lunch to respond to children's holiday hunger. The experiences of Lunch volunteers and myself were captured in solicited diaries and interviews. These narratives form the basis for the subsequent analysis in Chapters Six and Seven. *Chapter Six* started at the beginning of volunteers' journeys, questioning how people started to volunteer. Chapter Six concluded that faith is a significant affect that can motivate action in multiple ways, but faith as an affect shows it does not operate in isolation from other affects; effort and enthusiasm are also affects. *Chapter Seven* continued Lunch volunteers' journeys, questioning how people persisted in volunteering. Chapter Seven concluded that motivation, including faith, must be continually re-ignited for action to persist because volunteers are affected by their volunteering experiences.

## **2. Questioning Humans' Capacity and Will to Act**

This research has staged and made use of a tension between affective experience which affects the individual but is also beyond the individual, with the more traditional sense of ourselves as the determinant of our actions. The contributions of this tension – and thinking affect theory and faith through each other – are twofold. First, the research contributes to affective geographies by thinking through the mechanism of affect theory in how the body comes to act. This is significant as it has hitherto not been well addressed in affect theory; in particular with analysis often starting with the body once it is already acting (for example B. Anderson, 2016; Closs Stephens, 2016). Secondly, the research contributes to the development of an affect theory approach to faith-based research which is growing, but in its infancy (for example Holloway, 2013; A. Williams, 2016). In the context of Christian-based research such an approach needs to – and to date has not – address how humans come to act; in part, this is because in Christian theology will is paramount for human action, and yet in affect theory Spinoza (1996) is traditionally understood as denying human will. Therefore, for an affect theory analysis of faith-based research, particularly in a Christian context, there is a need to find a way forward for analysis that does not negate a Spinozian nor Christian understanding of human action and will.

Contrary to much work in affective geographies that uses 'affect' as synonymous with 'affect theory' (for example in much of the edited collection by B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010b), this research has been deliberate using these terms in order to draw out the distinction between affect and affection: whilst an affect operates between bodies, an affection is about the state of the body itself; and as such, affection precisely emphasises the impact of an affect upon a body (Spinoza, 1996, IIdéf3). Framing faith and motivation through affect theory gives a specific approach to volunteering. Through this, this research has responded to a lack of attention in the geographies of voluntarism to the 'how' of volunteering (Milligan, 2007) because previous foci have predominantly been on spaces and places of volunteering, and how volunteering relates to the UK political context (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004). As in this research, other examples of volunteering research have recognised that faith motivations do not necessarily result in action, for example NCVO (2007, 49) refers to "faith as a predisposition" towards volunteering with "situational factors" leading to a person starting volunteering, and the 2004 Citizenship Survey for England and Wales (cited in Locke, 2007) found that socio-economic characteristics had more influence upon a person volunteering than their faith. To some extent this thesis is similar to these in that I recognise the affects of faith alongside other affects. However, I have found that faith for Lunch volunteers was a particularly significant motivation, both for starting volunteering and for how volunteers were affected by volunteering experiences. Through engaging with participatory and affect theory methodologies, this research has engaged with and followed Lunch volunteers' journeys over time to engage with these at a greater depth than is possible in a survey that relies upon reductive responses. Through this I have thereby added to volunteering research with a different methodological and analytical emphasis for understanding how people volunteer.

What the tension over will has enabled this research to argue as decisive for humans' capacity and will to act is how a person engages with affection in an experience. An affection, such as a sense of enjoyment enhancing commitment towards the act of volunteering, persists beyond the moment to re-configure the body for its next similar encounter. In this respect, affection provides an opportunity for humans' capacity to act. This is because for Spinoza (1996), once a person increases their knowledge then they can move away from imagination and illusion which are the lowest forms of knowledge (IIP40S) – including the illusion that they act without the affect of prior causes (IIP48, 62) – in order to increase their power to act (VP3C). I have therefore argued that Spinoza does not emphatically deny the existence of will. However, a person is formed through these affections, which moves action and analysis beyond a pre-determined subject to put

emphasis on the affections themselves. To reiterate, a person becoming more aware through reflection and gaining knowledge of the prior causes under which they act is therefore a way in which a person changes through their awareness of an experience. Drawn out from Lunch volunteers' narratives, the implication of affect theory for how to understand faith and a person's capacity to act is that a person needs to become more aware of the conditions under which they volunteer (act), of which faith is one. Faith as an affect takes the focus of action beyond human bodies because faith, as understood in this thesis, is about the relationship between an individual and God. Therefore by its very nature faith-based social action moves beyond a human subject focus. Does this mean that volunteers at Lunch who spoke and wrote about faith as a motivation to volunteer were aware of the prior causes of their actions, and therefore acted with a degree of will? Perhaps, but an issue remains here as to what causes they were not aware of, or did not share in their narratives.

The question of what volunteers may have been unaware of, or did not share, leads into a methodological reflection because I cannot necessarily know from their narratives what they were not aware of, nor where imagination was misplaced as a higher form of knowledge. Chapters Six and Seven included a large number of diary and interview extracts. This was purposeful and important on both participatory and affect theory levels for interpretation to not only be through my analysis, but to also facilitate the volunteers being able to speak through the text. There is, then, a methodological advantage to having combined the theory of action with the practicing of action because this allowed me to go alongside people in the action I was seeking to understand, and then understand and interpret that action through affect theory. However, only I – not the volunteers – made use of affect theory. This raises a question: would it have made a difference to the analysis, including being aware of what one is unaware of, if I had discussed affect theory with the volunteers who wrote diaries and undertook interviews? On one level this would have facilitated a more collaborative analysis that would be in-line with participatory approaches to analysis (as for example discussed by Cahill, 2009). To my knowledge, research with a collaborative analysis with research participants that makes use of affect theory has not been undertaken before. It would be fruitful to trial such an approach, but it would require a considerable amount of time and contribution from volunteers to understand affect theory. At Lunch had this been a requirement for volunteers to participate in the research it certainly would have deterred interest. There is also a question over whether giving an outline of affect theory to the volunteers would have changed their narratives. Personally, my narrative was changed by the affect theory framework because I thought and reflected more in terms of my capacity to act, how I was being affected, and how I was affecting others. The volunteers' narratives

and the variety of what volunteers shared are considerable strengths of this research, and it is questionable whether discussing affect theory with volunteers would have narrowed down what was shared. Therefore, whilst a collaborative analysis with volunteers would be a fruitful experiment, for the purposes of this research the decision not to discuss affect theory with volunteers stands.

What is also notable in terms of faith, action and will, is that the notion of faith resulting in a duty to volunteer was unpopular. Contrary to the argument that can be made through Augustine (1964; 1976) that faith instigates a moral obligation to help others in need, this was not how volunteers understood faith as a cause of their actions. Corroborating Cloke et al.'s (2007) faith-based research, people at Lunch predominantly shared a narrative of volunteering because they wanted to, not because they felt obliged to. In interviews some volunteers took this further, expressing indignation that duty could be suggested, as if this downplayed the authenticity of their faith motivation. Rather, what emerged from volunteers' narratives was a distinction between faith instilling a duty to volunteer, and faith resulting in a desire to volunteer. For example, in Chapter Seven I explored how Charlotte equated duty with volunteer burnout, whereas for herself her faith motivation combined with enjoyment of being at Lunch resulting in her desire to persist in volunteering. This reiterates that how a person engaged with how they were affected by faith was important for turning a motivation into action because a motivation to act does not necessarily result in action. For Lunch volunteers, faith resulting in a desire to volunteer predominantly revolved around a desire to help people in need, but had there been more volunteers from more diverse faith traditions then motivations could have been more diverse, for example including an emphasis on evangelism.

In Chapter Seven the question of humans' capacity and will to act was extended to reflection and persistence in action. Affection is again significant for understanding this because the impact of past experiences at Lunch changed volunteers' affective capacities and therefore whether they would volunteer again; affection both changes and challenges the notion of a pre-existing subject. How experiences at Lunch compared with people's expectations of volunteering, and how they reflected on this (engaged with affections), were therefore important for their future capacities to act. Persistence in action is distinct from volunteers learning from experience, which is perhaps a more familiar term in the voluntary sector. They are distinct because learning from experience is focussed upon the volunteer (the subject) and is about the volunteer gaining knowledge from what has happened. In contrast, persistence in action through affection gives a different emphasis because it shows that volunteers cannot entirely control how they are affected, although how they engage with

affections is also important for future action. Therefore, affect and affection put more emphasis on the relationships between people and recognise other active bodies in an experience, rather than an experience being passive and the person active; which is implied by the notion of learning from experience. To reiterate, volunteers do not only learn from experience, but through affection they are changed by experience.

As well as affect and affection, a third component of affect theory also makes a contribution for understanding persistence in volunteering. This is *conatus* which for Spinoza (1996, IIP6) is the desire of a person to persist in existence. *Conatus* raises the question of self-reflection for how a body engages with its affections for how it will act in the future – and persevere in existence – at a level that is both voluntary and involuntary. Some Lunch volunteers, myself included, had a determination to persist in volunteering, often because of a faith motivation, and despite negative affections from experiences at Lunch. This idea is extended further by the notion of resilience: how volunteers have engaged with past affections can make a difference in how they engage with a similar affection in the present or future. For example if a negative affection has been engaged with in the past, with the result that a person persisted in volunteering, then the impact of a similar negative affection in the future is lessened and may be more easily overcome, with the result that action still persists. Yet, what *conatus* reminds us is that faith does not make volunteers immune to being challenged by affections and experience. Ultimately *conatus* suggests that in time a person is unlikely to continue with an action – volunteering – if that action is negatively affecting the body because this would negatively impact their *conatus*. This point can only be taken so far from the research's empirics because I predominantly engaged with volunteers who were persisting, rather than people who had stopped volunteering. However, this extension of persistence in relation to *conatus* does mirror other research on volunteering, for example that by Wilson (2000) which emphasises the problem of volunteer burnout, and relates to the aforementioned distinction between faith as duty and desire with Charlotte linking the former to burnout. The problem of volunteering experiences not matching a person's *conatus* could be translated to reflect research by Yanay and Yanay (2008, 65) who argue that a person may stop volunteering when there is a difference between what they feel they "ought" to do and their "actual" experiences. Therefore, in contrast to research that has found the reason a person stops volunteering is due to change in circumstances (NCVO, 2015), through affect and affection this research emphasises persistence in volunteering as a process because a person is changed by how they are affected.

Faith was a motivation for people to volunteer and persist in volunteering at Lunch, and as an affect, faith also operated alongside other affects. However, emergent from volunteers'

narratives was the significance that people placed upon faith as a motivation. The significance that people put upon faith is both a challenge and an opportunity for how affect theory can engage with faith methodologically and theoretically. First, it is a considerable advantage for faith-based research that an affect theory approach goes some way for research to recognise the ontological status of faith and God in people's lives. It does this because by understanding faith as the personal relationship between an individual and God, faith as an affect shows that it is both part of and beyond faithful subjects. Furthermore, to say that faith is an affect is not to characterise a particular 'type' of Christian faith. Rather, faith as an affect is to refer to a personal relationship that affects human action in a wide variety of ways. There is also a challenge here from faith to affect theory: to what extent can affect theory adequately embrace the power of faith and God? This is where thinking affect through faith speaks most directly back to affect theory on how to study affect and faith. This power and significance of faith for faithful subjects is often lost in social science research, for example, Baillie Smith et al. (2013, 127) define religion as a "set of social relations" and faith as a means to approach these social relations. Such a definition reduces religion and faith to a social concern, rather than recognising the ontological significance of faith for faithful subjects. For faithful subjects, the ontological status of faith – which I have just argued that affect theory goes some way to recognise – is not comparable to other affects, for example politics. Does affect theory give space for this? Not entirely, because Spinoza does not make a distinction between different affects, as rather, all affects can affect. Furthermore, contrary to a Christian understanding of faith, Spinoza's (1996, IP16C3) understanding of God does not allow for a personal relationship between humans and God. This adds to the conclusion of Chapter Six where I drew out how faith problematises the Spinozian (1996, IIP39dem) distinction in affect theory between passive and active affections because an affection from faith cannot necessarily be easily reconciled in the sense of whether the volunteer was the cause; the volunteer may not be the cause of a faith affection, but can still actively engage with that affection. Faith challenges affect theory, then, on the significance of different affects in people's lives, and with the insistence that faith for faithful subjects is not necessarily comparable to other affects by virtue of its relation to God. This need not necessarily be a barrier to an affect theory approach to faith-based research, as long as we recognise the heightened affective power and ontological status of faith for faithful subjects.

Overall, in terms of humans' capacity and will, thinking affect theory and faith through each other has the result that approaches to each can learn from each other, with respectively more and less will than each has traditionally been associated with. In terms of faith and persistence in volunteering, this tension takes the research away from an exclusive focus on

the acting subject to become more aware of the conditions under which they are acting, which I turn to next.

### **3. The Conditions under which Faithful Subjects Act**

This research has taken as its focus faithful subjects (Lunch volunteers) as they start and persist in acting. What affect theory raises is how as well as faith being a key motivation, the conditions under which subjects acts are also important for how people start and persist in volunteering. These conditions exist beyond the subject, and challenge the notion of a pre-determined subject. Ergo, how volunteers are affected in their volunteering experiences can facilitate or deter persistence of volunteering. I will draw out three conditions under which the subject acts: timing, duration, and passing moments.

First, timing. There were several faith-related timing elements that affected Lunch volunteer recruitment. These are drawn from across my own and Lunch volunteers' narratives. Initially recruitment took place at the time of the 2015 general election. In the city in which Lunch was being established people had predominantly voted for Labour Party MPs when the Conservative Party had won a majority government. Typified by Violet, a faith motivation to help people in need coincided with a party in power that would likely continue welfare reforms that had previously corresponded with increasing levels of food poverty in the UK. This motivated Violet and others to respond to local food poverty by volunteering at Lunch. Secondly, there are two church situational factors around timing: (i) the church that would become the Lunch host church wanted to expand its youth work, and (ii) several churches that I recruited volunteers from already wanted to help the Lunch host church, but lacked a means that they felt appropriate to do so (reiterating Brydon-Miller, 2004, on the fear of acting); until I recruited for Lunch volunteers. Thirdly, I recruited volunteers at a time when food poverty and holiday hunger were increasingly catching media and public attention. Joining a national charity to run Lunch helped to capture the affect of this, as I discussed in relation to Paul's and my own narrative in Chapter Six. When framed by a faith motivation to help people in need, these timing and situational factors came together to form compelling reasons for people to turn broader faith motivations to help people in need into volunteering at Lunch.

Part of timing is the place of affects and affections in a sequence. As I explored in Chapter Seven, affect theory gives a different emphasis on the process of reflection because it spotlights qualities in our ongoing commitment to actions, and takes into account how we are affected by past experiences. For example, how experiences at Lunch compared to

people's expectations and imagination of volunteering, and how they engaged with these affections, were significant for whether they would volunteer again. Following from this, the developing sense of routine and familiarity as I and other volunteers became more experienced in running Lunch could positively affect our perceptions, reflection, and ultimately our desire to persist in volunteering. Affections are never identical (Spinoza, 1996, IIPXIIILIIA1), but they are to some extent repeatable if the conditions under which the body is acting do not significantly change, because a body can then pursue an action with the expectation that it will be affected again similarly. Here thinking affect and faith through each other has changed how to understand the persistence of action. This is because when faith is particularly significant in motivating action and changes how a person engages with affections (thereby favouring persistence in faith-motivated action), then in combination with these other conditions, the affections could become more likely to be repeatable. Therefore, faith could change how people engaged with their affections, and thereby encourage persistence in volunteering at Lunch.

Following on from timing is duration. Volunteering at Lunch was a short term commitment to one school holiday at a time. I noted in Chapters Six and Seven how volunteers' commitment to Lunch varied, and potentially differed to my own investment in the project. Commitment is important in terms of duration because if volunteers became committed to Lunch, then they are more likely to persist in volunteering. Why? The answer is twofold, relating to both affection and conatus. First, people's developing commitment to Lunch coincided with the numbers of children attending Lunch increasing, which contributed towards an affection of a sense of need being successfully met, and affected volunteers with encouragement. Secondly, this links to conatus: if volunteering becomes part of a person's daily experience and integrated into their 'normality' then it can become a part of their conatus in that they perceive volunteering as part of their existence. This is reflected in comments by Anna on the church leadership who said:

I can't imagine a holiday without it [Lunch]. I really can't. It's now part and parcel of my mind-set. It's holidays, there's Lunch.

Anna, interview, October 2016

Would Anna's sentiment persist over time? It did for the duration of this research and a year after, but writing this chapter with hindsight, Anna did not persist indefinitely. However, since the Lunch handover, Lunch has continued to run successfully, with the Director of MakeLunch calling it: "the most successful transfer of leadership we have seen since the start of our network in 2011." In terms of duration, studying affect and faith was limited by framing the research period in a specific timeframe because Lunch's story and volunteers'



narratives did not end when I handed over Lunch in September 2016. However, as I reflected in the methodology, I felt it was necessary to handover Lunch to give myself distance from it for undertaking the research analysis.

Duration of time is important for the persistence of action, but so are passing moments. This is where faith speaks back to affect theory to emphasise how particular moments can result in an affection that has a greater affect upon the body's affective capacity – and persistence in volunteering – than other affections. Specific moments, for example Tony playing dominoes with Jonah and his friends, took on meanings that were “more than” what was represented in those moments such that they affected volunteers with a desire to persist in volunteering. Which moments would be significant cannot be determined in advance, and are not guaranteed, but volunteers' narratives have shown how moments with the children, realisations about hunger, or moments of teamwork, can have lasting affections that go far beyond the moment and contribute towards developing religious subjectivities. In how a person is affected by such moments, faith can change a person's affective capacity, and ergo change how they are affected. As I explored in the previous section in relation to will, faith for many faithful subjects has a distinct affective power because faith relates subjects to God. Therefore, often, this “more than” meaning came about due to volunteers interpreting those moments through their faith. However, at the same time, volunteers were not in complete control of how they are affected because affections exist beyond bodies and affects operate at a level between bodies. What faith also does here for affect theory is to emphasise the subtlety of affection to move beyond Spinoza's primary definition in *Ethics* around increasing and decreasing the capacity of a body to act (1996, IIIdef3). Rather, the body's affective capacity is continually changing because it is continually affected. This is a subtlety that can be lost in definitions of affection and affective capacity in affective geographies, and is one to be emphasised. Furthermore, as well as faithful subjects changing through how they are affected, faith in itself also changes and is not static because relationships also develop. Equally, faithful subjects are only one part of their relationship with God. This reiterates that faith can also be challenged and how faith affects can also change.

#### **4. Performances of Faith: “More-than” Food...**

##### **4.1. ... In Volunteers' Daily Experiences**

How were people's experiences at Lunch performances of their faith? By considering volunteering in these terms, this research has responded to the call by Sutherland (2017) to explore religious subjects in relation to the transcendent, particularly to give attention to how

religious subjects produce theology daily. In doing so, this research moves beyond understanding faith as a part of a person's identity, both in wider voluntarism research and the geography of religion.

In wider voluntarism research there are numerous quantitative analyses that have questioned the role of faith in volunteering without coming to a consistent statistical consensus (Yeung, 2004). For example: Becker and Dhingra (2001) explore the statistical relationship between volunteering and church attendance, arguing that volunteering increases with church attendance; Einolf (2011) gives a statistical analysis of the relationship between religion and helping others; and Forbes and Zampelli (2014) tested models on the impact of social, religious, and human capital on voluntarism. In contrast to these examples of statistical testing of faith, this thesis has questioned faith and volunteering in terms of humans' capacity and will to act, and persist in acting. By unpacking action through affect theory, this has emphasised how Lunch volunteers understood faith as having a particularly significant affective power, and in this way volunteering at Lunch was a performance of their faith.

Although it was an important landmark in human geography for faith to be recognised as a part of people's identity (for example see Holloway and Valins, 2002), in this research affect theory has taken attention further than faith simply being an identity. This is because through people's volunteering experiences I have identified faith as an affect that has the potential to affect every aspect of a person's life; for some their whole life is a performance of faith. In doing so, in Sutherland's (2017) terms, religious subjects (re)-produce their theologies daily. Referring to religious and faithful subjects rather than faith as a part of a person's identity emphasises not only how faith is performed, but also how faith and the person both change through this performance. This is because identity implies a more static notion of faith, whereas subjectivity opens out the subject by taking into account how subjects are continually affected and hence changed by their performances. Affect theory therefore extends how the continual production of theologies can be understood: the combination of affect and affection (Spinoza, 1996, IIIdef3) emphasises how people are changed by their faith performances and they are continually affected. This is important. Why? First, it is important because in the context of volunteering it breaks down the idea that there is a 'giver' and a 'receiver'; rather, both are affected by their interaction. To put this another way, affect theory emphasises bodies and affects as relational (Bailey et al., 2008; B. Anderson and Harrison, 2010a; Vannini, 2015a), and so both bodies are necessarily changed by their interaction. Secondly, this is important because a body being affected also recognises how faith does not make faithful subjects immune to being

challenged in their acting: faith-based volunteering should not be romanticised. On the contrary, volunteers at Lunch were both enthusiastic and disenchanted by their experiences, and affect theory reiterates that faith does not protect a volunteer from disappointment or being negatively affected. This returns to the point that how a person engages with how they are affected is important for how they will act in the future, and whether they will persist in volunteering. Understanding volunteering in relation to faith and performance therefore gives a different way of understanding people's volunteering experiences, particularly compared to more traditional conceptions of volunteering such as in relation to social capital or citizenship. As I explored in Chapter Seven, these approaches emphasise the organisational and societal gains of people volunteering (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a; 2003b) rather than how volunteers themselves are changed.

In exploring volunteering performances at Lunch, this research has made use of multiple volunteers' narratives. It is notable that within these narratives each person's faith is personal and therefore unique meaning that there are a variety of compositions of faithful subjects, and of faith performances. It is also significant to remember it is through the importance that people placed on their own faith in their narratives that this research focusses on faith, whilst also recognising that faith operates alongside other affects. The majority of volunteers understood volunteering as a performance of faith in terms of responding to Christian teaching on helping people in need, rather than, say, evangelism or duty. However, how this played out in people's performances also mattered to volunteers; for example Violet, Amelia and Daniel had concerns at coming across as a "do-gooder". To frame this in terms of affect theory, it mattered to volunteers how their faith motivation to act in turn affected others; action alone was not enough. Building upon this, this research has followed Cloke et al.'s (2007) work on volunteer responses to homelessness which argues that faith motivations are more complex than stereotypes. A key contribution from this thesis for the geography of religion is emphasising the complexity of faith performances, not only in how ultimately they are unique for each volunteer, but also how faith not only affects, but concerns people in terms of how they in turn will affect others. Overall, faith being performed reiterates the role that faith plays and difference that faith makes in people's daily lives, and most significantly that faith affects how people act in multiple ways. Faith can exist without actions, but it is through actions – framed in this research through performance – that faith is brought into the world in a way that extends beyond belief. What affect theory adds to this understanding is that faith is not necessarily explicit in these actions, and so actions can have more meaning than what is represented to others, and hence ultimately through faith, that meaning relates a person to God. This research therefore follows the

work of Holloway (2011a; 2013) and A. Williams (2016) on performance of faith in worship spaces, but extends this concern to people's daily lives.

Following on from this, in Chapter Two I considered how sacred and secular spaces are porous, with a worship space potentially being sacred to one person, and not to another (Holloway, 2011a). Lunch took place in a church hall, and yet when volunteering was a faith performance, this was not in the sense of a formal religious practice in a worship space. What are the implications of this in terms of people's performances of faith? How did the affects that people experienced in the more informal faith space at Lunch differ compared to a more formal worship space? This was not a comparative study between two different types of space for faith performances, however, the setting of Lunch will have affected people's experiences: they entered for Lunch in the church hall through the same door that leads into the main church; there was a small and busy kitchen for the cooking team; and the play team interacted with the children in the large hall and the converted crypt space that had been re-designed for youth work. For those who also worshipped at the Lunch host church, these would have been familiar spaces, but for others the spaces were new. The host church used the main church building, church hall, and crypt for worship services; the latter two being the same spaces where Lunch took place. This reiterates from Chapter Two that sacred and secular spaces are not a binary or dualism (Brace et al., 2011; Holloway, 2013; Olson et al., 2013) because both spaces and subjectivities are porous. The meaning of a space is therefore constructed through performance (Brace et al., 2011), and the space's meaning can last beyond that performance. Spaces becoming associated with different meanings can be shared between people, and so a person does not have to have had the experience themselves to associate a space with it. An example of this is pilgrimage sites where people travel to a particular place because of its widely associated religious meaning (as explored by Scriven, 2014; Maddrell and Scriven, 2016). This is not to say that volunteers at Lunch understood volunteering as performances of their faith because of the church location – volunteers' narratives showed that faith motivated their volunteering and affected their engagement with experiences at Lunch, but people did not refer to it as a 'sacred' space. It would therefore be a fruitful future research direction to question how, and if, people's performances of faith are different at a MakeLunch project held in a school – would this change the strong link that people made between faith and volunteering? Or, for a MakeLunch project in a school or community building, what difference, if any, does that make for who accessed the project – did Lunch being in a church deter children from families that were not Christian from attending? This research has emphasised how volunteers understood their faith predominantly as something to perform *throughout* their daily lives in any space, and so it does not seem significant from volunteers' narratives for

their performances of faith that Lunch took place in a church hall. In turn, if more service-users would access Lunch outside of a space that was traditionally considered as sacred then there are significant policy and practice implications for MakeLunch and wider holiday hunger responses because this could affect how efficiently and sufficiently holiday hunger is being addressed. I return to this question in terms of multi-faith responses to food poverty in the future research directions.

As I explored in Chapter Two, key themes in the geography of religion have been how faith is expressed through people's identities, subjectivities and performances. These are inherently spatial concerns in that they occur in space, but spaces can also become infused with meaning through such faith performances. In this way, some spaces can reflect faith performances more than others, and this in itself can vary temporally. Therefore, building upon the above discussion on sacred and secular spaces, and the role of the church hall space in people's performance of faith, the fundamental contribution that this research makes for understanding space in the geography of religion is that first, volunteers spatially performed their faith at Lunch, and secondly, such faith performances instilled particular meanings and experiences of the space of Lunch for both children and volunteers. Extending this research to include another Lunch project run by another church group in church hall, a school, or a non-religious community building would provide an interesting comparison and accentuate the difference that can space make to people's performances of faith. In terms of faith, space and performance, where people emphasised faith as instigating action throughout their daily lives and put priority upon performance and faith more than space, it is questionable how important the space of Lunch was to people's performances if the activity could have taken place in a similar way in a different space. Taking this further, the space of Lunch emphasises for the geography of religion how religious and secular spaces are increasingly blurred (Holloway, 2011a). This is because whilst Lunch was part of a faith-based organisation, took place in a church hall, and many volunteers were Christian, ultimately the project's aim was food provision to respond to holiday hunger. In this respect, whilst the church hall space indicated faith involvement in the running of Lunch, and some volunteers were known to children as being part of the church congregation, the activities at Lunch did not have religious teachings. This therefore adds to the discussion in Chapter Two on the importance of postsecularism for understanding the role of religion in society and space, and also that postsecularism is spatially and temporally variable (Pabst, 2011; Dunn and Piracha, 2015); Lunch is one spatial example of the role of religious groups in society today. However, as emphasised in Chapter Seven, Lunch was also a space of potential for community, for building relationships and showing care, and volunteers understood this as reflecting their faith performances.

This is therefore a way that the space of Lunch could reflect faith performances, whether explicitly or implicitly. This echoes the work of Cloke et al. (2017) that it is limiting to simply think of food banks and similar spaces in terms of food provision. Finally, reflecting upon the role of space in this research, one restriction that this research has faced in discussing the literal space in which Lunch took place is the decision to give anonymity to the volunteers, the project host church, and the project area. The nature of the church and area means that with only a small amount of detail on the space it would potentially be easily recognisable to people reading or hearing about the research who know the area and the promise of anonymity in the research would therefore be broken. In research ethics guidelines, anonymity is often a default standard and considered good practice. In this research I was encouraged by the host church priest to use anonymity not only to protect the church and volunteers' identities but also give me more freedom in writing about my experiences at the project. However, in reality I knew that volunteers and the church leaders could read my thesis and would likely recognise themselves and others in my writing, and so I did not experience more freedom in what I wrote. Rather, there is an argument within participatory approaches that naming participants in research increases their agency and power in the research process (for example see Franks, 2015). Therefore, moving forward, in future research I will more thoroughly discuss the option of anonymity with project partners and participants to ascertain their informed choice, rather than assuming that anonymity is the superior ethical option. Had the Lunch location been named then more specific spatial reflection could have been given in this conclusion on the role of the project in terms of bringing people from different areas together, and its legacy in terms of holiday hunger provision in the area.

How this research has been able to grasp people's performances of faith has been changed by the methodological combination of participatory and affect theory approaches. In particular, these approaches have complemented the inclusion of my own faith positionality and narrative to the research (responding to calls by TR Slater, 2004; Olson et al., 2013, for faith-based research by religious geographers). This is because my experiences of being with people at Lunch facilitate a different level of understanding of those experiences than had I relied purely upon people's interviews or diaries. Ultimately, having shared an experience gave me a greater understanding of experiences than relying solely upon volunteers recounting their experiences. Our shared faith positionality resulted in a shared familiarity with faith language, and aided my understanding of moments in other people's narratives that by virtue of their faith held more meaning than what had been represented in that action. It is possible that people's knowledge of our shared faith encouraged them to share such moments, or perhaps heightened what was shared about the significance of faith

moments. Finally, myself having faith meant that I could understand from my own positionality that faith can have a distinct significance beyond other factors in a person's life. I therefore follow others in arguing that it is easier for a person of faith to recognise that faith is more than a social construct (Bailey et al., 2008).

I have therefore not relied solely on how others shared their narratives for a "more-than-representational" analysis (Lorimer, 2005, 84), because I have been able to reflect on my own capacity and will to act and reflect. That said, in order to access others' narratives I have been limited by how they have shared their experiences in diaries and interviews. It was a concern if people would feel comfortable sharing their experiences with myself as the Lunch co-ordinator. It is encouraging, then, that people did share negative experiences as well as positive ones because whilst I cannot know the extent to which volunteers shared the totality of their experiences, the inclusion of negatives negates a rose-tinted view of volunteering at Lunch. It is therefore a strength of this research that multiple narratives are included, which at times were similar, and at times diverged, in order to elucidate the complexity of faith and volunteering in how people are affected, and affect. On a more personal level of methodological reflection, with hindsight, I can see that I set up Lunch in a way that I intuitively understood as performing my faith. In particular, as I have already reflected, the lack of evangelical content influenced the 'type' of Christian who would volunteer and perhaps increased the likelihood of attracting volunteers who had a similar notion of faith to myself. Although this has limited the types of narrative shared on motivation, establishing Lunch in this way did mean that I was more readily able to analyse and reflect on how I performed my faith, and meant that I was in a similar position to understand others' narratives. Overall, although not without limitations, this combination of participatory and affect theory methodologies is one to be encouraged in faith-based research in order to access how faith is performed, experienced, and the meaning that these hold for faithful subjects.

#### *4.2. ...the Role of Lunch in Society*

As I explored in Chapter Two, the post-secular, post-secularisation and postsecularity are much debated notions in the geography of religion that respond to secularisation theses and question the role and place of religion in society (for example Kong, 2010; Romanillos et al., 2012; Cloke, 2015). In terms of these debates, it is significant that in this research Lunch did not have any religious content for the children attending, and yet it took place in a church hall that was adjoined to the main church building. What, then, does the research contribute in terms of the place of faith and religion in society?

Lunch joined a wealth of other faith-based organisations in responding to UK food poverty and holiday hunger at a time when there was – and still is – a lack of state engagement and provision (Feeding Britain, 2017). Ergo, whilst Lunch was not a faith activity in terms of the content for the children, the fact that it took place in a church building, was run by a church (through myself), and the majority of volunteers were Christian, does add to evidence that faith groups are playing an important role in responding to food poverty. This is true in terms of debates in the geography of religion, but also for policy making with this research contributing to the latest *Feeding Britain* (2017) report. Ultimately, as exemplified by Sarah on the church leadership in Chapter Six, the host church understood Lunch as responding to need in the community. In these terms, as well as contributing to conceptual debate on the place of religion in society, the research has resulted in societal impact by responding to children's holiday hunger in a highly deprived inner city area. Without this research and researcher, Lunch would not have been established at this time, in this community. A collaborative approach was important to result in a project responding to real need in the community, and to involve local people in this response rather than being research that was 'done' to people (Pain et al., 2011). Whilst I ran Lunch, we served over 770 meals to over 100 children. There has therefore been a tangible service provision impact for these children in tackling their holiday hunger through the research project. This level of service provision was of a greater scale than the host church had ever previously undertaken, having one-off holiday events in the past. In this way, the research project gave impact in capacity building for the church and its local community to show that running the project regularly in the holidays was possible, and that volunteers could be recruited including from outside the local area. Through this, the research brought people from different backgrounds to volunteer together, and challenged people's assumptions about a community experiencing deprivation. This responds to two reflections on volunteering by Fyfe and Milligan (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003a; 2003b; Milligan and Fyfe, 2004): that resources for voluntary welfare provision are unevenly distributed, and that the local impact of voluntary provision is variable. First, being part of MakeLunch attracted more volunteers from a wider area and was successful in more funding applications than otherwise would have been likely, thereby sharing resources from wealthier parts of the city. Secondly, this enhanced the local impact of the voluntary provision, and by submitting statistics on provision at Lunch, it contributed towards MakeLunch's campaigning against holiday hunger, for example in submitting evidence to the APPG Hunger. How affect theory takes this contribution further is through showing how it was not only children at Lunch who were affected; through affection volunteers are also changed by their experiences at Lunch, for example through enjoyment,



learning more about food poverty, and through the relationships they developed with other volunteers and the children.

What Lunch and its volunteers also do for understanding the role of faith in society is to problematise how faith-based organisations are conceived and categorised. The commonplace categorisation of faith-based organisations by Sider and Unruh (2004) does not take into account variations within a faith-based project or organisation, nor that its activity and ethos can change over time. Lunch did not involve a faith-based activity for the children (in terms of play and food), but what affect theory has helped to understand is how for volunteers at Lunch, the experiences had meanings beyond what was explicitly represented in the play and food. For example, Violet called eating together “a real foretaste of the heavenly banquet”. How, then, should Lunch be categorised when the activity is understood differently by different people, changes over time, and for some has a meaning that is not represented in the project’s activity? Indeed, is a categorisation helpful? Perhaps what is needed more is an emphasis on the complexity and variation of faith-based organisations’ and volunteers’ activity – which an affect theory analysis accentuates – and to frame this in terms of postsecularity. This would emphasise the changing, experienced spaces and subjectivities of the post-secular, rather than looking for categorisations to respond to assumptions that post-secularisation is a concrete process.

A further point that is notable at Lunch in terms of faith and society was the lack of Muslim children that attended relative to the large Muslim population in the area. This began to change as more Muslim children attended towards the end of the period in which I ran Lunch. Volunteers commented to me on how the children did not appear to react when one girl arrived at Lunch and put on her headscarf, and others had halal meat options to eat. This begins to hint at the potential for both volunteers and children at Lunch for post-secular rapprochement; when people come together through social action provision who otherwise may not have met, and by coming together learn more about each other’s beliefs (Cloke and Beaumont, 2012; Cloke, 2015). Had relationships between the Christian and Muslim communities at Lunch been further developed during the research period, then conclusions here could have been more concrete, but this does signpost towards the potential.

To understand the role of faith in society, analysis through affect theory therefore gives an understanding of volunteers responding to holiday hunger as “more-than” simply a food provision activity. Rather, it was an activity in which volunteers variously performed their faith through being with others, and through which volunteers themselves were affected rather than only the traditional “recipient”. Furthermore, as volunteers’ narratives in

Chapters Six and Seven show, for multiple people volunteering was an interaction between politics and faith, and a way to be involved in campaigning for change for people experiencing food poverty. This is in direct contrast to a rights based approach which argues that voluntary sector action is compliant with the state, and allows the state to neglect citizens' right to food (for example Lambie-Mumford, 2017). This research therefore adds to literature on the contested relationship between the voluntary sector and the state with volunteers' personal experiences, whereas the contestation is often presented at the level of organisations and the state (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004; Milligan and Conradson, 2006). What affect theory adds to this is how volunteering at Lunch had more meaning than the giving of food: in the context of a rights based critique, for different people it was about gaining an understanding of people's experiences of food poverty; about equipping oneself to respond to political debates; and about responding in the absence of a state response but campaigning for a change in the state response. This gives a different way of understanding volunteering because it focusses on the meanings of the experiences for volunteers (which are not necessarily represented in their actions) and how volunteers are affected by these, rather than focussing primarily on the practices of volunteering as would more likely in an institutional or organisational approach to volunteering (as for example previously discussed in relation to Conradson, 2003; T Slater, 2012b). An affect theory approach to volunteering can therefore work alongside such other approaches so that when they are taken together in both academia and the voluntary sector, volunteering can be understood in terms of volunteer experiences and provision practices, each contributing towards understanding the varying role that faith groups play in society for welfare provision.

## **5. Persistence in Volunteering: a Process of Motivation, Action and Reflection**

The question of how people start and persist in volunteering is vital for voluntary sector leaders to understand if their projects that rely upon volunteers are to be sustainable (Milligan and Fyfe, 2004). However, the question of how people volunteer has not been well addressed (Buckingham and Jolley, 2015) and there is also a lack of research into holiday hunger, particularly from the angle of how people are responding to it. What contribution can this research make for the voluntary sector? The importance that I have placed upon dissemination follows the ideals of action research and participatory geographies for positive social change (Pain, 2004; Brydon-Miller et al., 2011), and responds to calls in the geography of religion for greater research dissemination and public relevance (Kong, 2011; Olson et al., 2013).

To some extent the research findings are specific: they are based upon the experiences of specific people, at a specific project, over a specific timeframe. However, this does not mean that the research findings are irrelevant to other projects and voluntary sector leaders. Rather, by using affect theory to analyse people's volunteering experiences at Lunch, a process of volunteering can be drawn out. To expand: in this research people were motivated to volunteer by different affects, of which faith was a significant affect. Simultaneously, people had expectations based on varying forms of knowledge and imagination as to what the experience of volunteering would be like. Then, as and once a person had volunteered at Lunch, they were affected by what they had experienced, and reflected on this, which in turn affected their response when I contacted them to ask if they would volunteer again in the next holiday. What this gives is a process of how people volunteer and persist in volunteering: a continual process of motivation, action, and reflection. Different language to that which Spinoza uses can therefore be used to open up the research findings to a wider audience in the voluntary sector, but still maintain the key insights that affect theory has given for understanding volunteering. Indeed, a similar process of volunteering around motivation, action and reflection was found through the analysis of a project that I completed during my ESRC-funding placement at Christian Aid that asked how a demographic of their volunteers persist in volunteering. This corroboration further suggests that generalisations about the process of volunteering can be drawn from the volunteers' experiences at Lunch. In this way the research dissemination bridges between the specific experiences at Lunch to contribute to how the persistence of volunteering can be understood in a more general sense in the voluntary sector, and how research impact has been developed.

First, these ideas were initially shared with MakeLunch and other people running MakeLunch projects (who MakeLunch calls Lunch Makers). The research has therefore had implications for MakeLunch in how they approach volunteering. I led workshops on volunteering for Lunch Makers at the MakeLunch annual conferences in 2016 and 2017. In 2016 an interactive session on volunteer recruitment and retainment made use of my preliminary research findings to show the need for valuing people in their different capacities to act as volunteers, and how a volunteer's experience changes over time as they become more familiar and enjoy the experience, which is essential if they are to persist in volunteering. In 2017 I led an interactive workshop on planning for volunteer project sustainability. This encouraged Lunch Makers to plan for the longer term, including a future that is not dependent on their leadership. Lunch Makers gave positive feedback about the difference the workshops made for running their projects:

<p>It made me think far more strategically as my role as a Lunch Maker. I now have a folder in place so that if I am unable to be around there are clear plans and guidance for others to use.</p> <p>(Lunch Maker, email, November 2017)</p>
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Through MakeLunch's online resources, Lunch Makers also have access to these workshops and a template that I produced for MakeLunch project leadership handovers. Through these resources I have had an impact on training for over 100 MakeLunch franchisees. This impact has been significant for MakeLunch, first to have research contribute to the charity's functioning, and secondly for funded research to be carried out at a time when the charity could not have afforded to fund the research itself and was developing training resources.

I have also shared the research findings more widely in the voluntary sector. From this research impact has been twofold: conceptual impact by contributing to understanding of how volunteers are motivated and persist in volunteering, and instrumental impact by influencing the practice of volunteer management for voluntary groups across the voluntary sector. This began as I published a policy briefing through the University of Bristol (figure five).

Figure Five: Policy Briefing for the Voluntary Sector (Denning, 2017)



## To retain volunteers, voluntary groups need to understand volunteers' motivations and volunteering experiences

Stephanie Denning, University of Bristol

### About the research

Food poverty in the UK has reached unprecedented levels. Faith groups and volunteers are playing a crucial role in responding to food poverty from food banks and children's holiday groups, through to collecting evidence and campaigning for change. When a person is motivated by their religious faith to volunteer and respond to poverty, this shows the importance of faith beyond worship spaces, in people's daily lives, and in wider society.

How are people motivated by their faith to volunteer? How do people keep on volunteering? This is important to understand if projects relying upon volunteers are going to be sustainable over time.

This research addresses these questions in the context of a Christian group responding to holiday hunger; children's food poverty in the school holidays. From the researcher running a project responding to holiday hunger, the research makes use of volunteers' diaries and interviews on their motivations and volunteering experiences. The research explores how faith motivates volunteering at the holiday hunger project, and how volunteers persisted in volunteering over time.

**This research examines how volunteers can be motivated by religious faith to volunteer, and how they persist in volunteering over time**

Research with:



Funded by:



### Policy implications

- If voluntary work is to be sustainable, then voluntary groups need to give as much attention to volunteers as to those a project is serving.
- Understanding volunteers' motivations, expectations and volunteering experiences will help voluntary groups to develop positive relationships with volunteers and gain their longer term support.
- It is vital that volunteers feel appreciated and valued, otherwise it is likely that they will stop volunteering or seek a different opportunity.
- Maintaining a personal relationship with volunteers is as important as volunteer recruitment.



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## Key findings

- Religious faith can be a key motivation to volunteer, but people's motivations are also affected by their volunteering experiences.
- When a person is motivated by their faith to volunteer, the experience - such as giving food - can have more meaning to the volunteer than is represented in the action itself.
- Motivations must be continually renewed if they are to keep on volunteering: it is not guaranteed that a person will persist in volunteering. Volunteering can therefore be understood as a continual process of action and reflection.
- Volunteers are affected by the experience of volunteering, not just the traditional 'recipient'. For example, Lunch volunteers were impacted by the experience, not just the children attending. How volunteers are affected can be positive and negative, change over time, and what seems like a passing moment can have a lasting impact upon the volunteer and their perception of the project.
- A faith motivation does not make volunteers immune to being challenged by their experiences, and so a sense of enjoyment, satisfaction and feeling appreciated are important for a person to want to continue volunteering.



Photo copyright: Stephanie Denning, 2016

## Further information

This research took place with the national charity 'MakeLunch' as part of Stephanie Denning's ESRC funded PhD at the University of Bristol.

'MakeLunch' is a Christian charity whose projects respond to holiday hunger by providing a free, hot and healthy meal in the school holidays. Holiday hunger is when children do not have enough to eat in the school holidays, partly due to the lack of free school meals outside of term time.

Over 20 months Stephanie established and ran one 'MakeLunch' project in a church and highly deprived UK inner city area (called 'Lunch' here). Lunch served local primary school aged children and relied upon volunteers to run. Sustainability beyond the research period was important, and so from the start the researcher gained funding for the project for 2-3 years with further funding options available in the future. Lunch has now been handed over and continues to run successfully in the local community.

For more information about 'MakeLunch' visit <https://makelunch.org.uk/>

## Contact the researcher

Stephanie Denning,  
School of Geographical Sciences,  
University of Bristol. Email:  
[stephanie.denning@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:stephanie.denning@bristol.ac.uk)  
Twitter: @SJ\_Denning

The briefing was published simultaneously with a press release (University of Bristol, 2017) on the research findings which attracted a significant amount of interest on social media. The press release had 313 views in the 3 weeks after publication by the University of Bristol, and on average readers spent 3 minutes, 35 seconds which suggests that they read the entire release. The press release has led to a comment piece in the *Church Times* (2018), articles in *Christian Today* (2017), *Inspire Magazine* (2017) and *Charities Management* (2017), and a guest blog with the food poverty campaigning organisation *End Hunger UK* (2017). These have taken the policy recommendations into Christian media and voluntary groups, primarily giving conceptual research impact.

Taking these policy recommendations into voluntary sector practice, I wrote a guest blog post with the *National Council Voluntary Organisations* (2017b). This gives other voluntary groups a practical guide to apply my research findings to their contexts, based around the four policy recommendations (figure six). Further extending impact upon voluntary sector practice, I have presented the research findings at voluntary sector conferences including *The Church of England* and the *National Council of Voluntary Organisations* conferences to academics and practitioners. The former coincided with a guest blog with the *William Temple Foundation* (2017) on faith and volunteering. There are examples where groups have followed up reading pieces by contacting me, for example *Tunbridge Wells Foodbank* and the *Street Games* holiday hunger scheme, which indicates an up-take of the policy recommendations into practice in the wider voluntary sector as well as at MakeLunch projects.

Finally, the research has contributed towards policy making: as a result of the research I became a member of the *Feeding Bristol Holiday Hunger* task group in July 2017, and co-authored a report on food poverty with the *Church Urban Fund* (Denning and Buckingham, 2017). In November 2017 I submitted evidence to the Director of *Feeding Britain* with the result that she said the research “informed the thinking and made a case for the importance of and impact on volunteers”, being cited multiples times in *Feeding Britain’s* (2017) report to support the Holiday Provision bill in Parliament.

**Figure Six: Practical Guide on Volunteer Retainment, Written for NCVO (2017b) Blog**

**1. Understanding volunteers' motivations, expectations and volunteering experiences will help voluntary groups to develop positive relationships with volunteers and gain their longer-term support**

People volunteer for a variety of reasons. How much do you ask people about their motivations when they start volunteering? If we can understand why people are volunteering we can then reflect with them on whether their motivations are being met by the experience they are having, and how their motivation may be changing. At the MakeLunch kitchen, volunteers kept diaries for the research process, which helped us to learn more about what people wanted to get out of volunteering.

**2. It is vital that volunteers feel appreciated and valued, otherwise it is likely that they will stop volunteering or seek a different opportunity**

Even with a strong motivation to volunteer it is likely that a person will look for some personal enjoyment or benefit, for example feeling appreciated by the project leader. If an experience remains unenjoyable it can encourage a person to volunteer elsewhere; it is likely that there will be other projects that can meet their motivations. We responded to this by holding an annual volunteer celebration to thank our volunteers, and to give a chance for volunteers to socialise together.

**3. Maintaining a personal relationship with volunteers is as important as volunteer recruitment**

This follows from the previous two points: if we can get to know our volunteers, what motivates them, and how they are finding volunteering, then this will help to retain them as volunteers. Do you give volunteers the opportunity to reflect on their experiences with you as the project leader?

If we can retain volunteers, then the strain of volunteer recruitment can be eased. Again, we learned more about people's volunteering experiences from their research diaries than otherwise would have occurred.

**4. If voluntary work is to be sustainable, then voluntary groups need to give as much attention to volunteers as to those a project is serving**

Clearly, the need that a project is responding to is important. However, if we rely upon volunteers for this response, then we need to give as much attention to volunteers to ensure we have their support to maintain this response. At MakeLunch, this research has contributed to workshops at their Annual Conferences on volunteer recruitment and retainment, and planning for the longer term.

If you are managing volunteers, it's important to consider how well you know them. Spend some time reflecting with them on their motivations and experiences in order to build your understanding and relationship with the team. It is easy to focus our efforts and energy on the aim of a project and on recruiting volunteers, but we need to retain volunteers too if voluntary sector projects are to be sustainable.



## 6. Future Directions

This research has made theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions which means that there are multiple possibilities for future research directions. Perhaps most prominently, there is the opportunity for future faith-based enquiry to make use of both affect theory and participatory approaches in order to benefit from the insights this research has employed; namely an approach that engages the researcher with acting faithful subjects, getting to the heart of the meaning of their actions which, when related to faith, often hold more meaning than what is outwardly represented in that action. The combination of affect theory and participatory methodologies therefore allows the researcher an insight into people's performances of faith that would be difficult to attain, for example, in relying solely upon interviews with volunteers. Such an approach could be taken forward to a range of areas. In particular, to end this conclusion I wish to explore two specific future directions: multi-faith responses to food poverty, and questions over inclusion and exclusion in food poverty responses.

### 6.1. *Faith and Volunteering: Multi-faith Responses to Food Poverty*

Faith groups are increasingly leading the voluntary sector response to UK food poverty (APPG Hunger, 2015). However, research across the social sciences has predominantly focussed on Christian responses to food poverty, and often through food banks (for example Buckingham and Jolley, 2015; Lambie-Mumford, 2015; Garthwaite, 2016; Cloke et al., 2017). For reasons previously outlined, this research has followed others by focussing upon Christian responses to food poverty, but moved away from food banks' response. However, if we are to fully understand the varying role of faith in motivating responses to food poverty, and the differences that faith makes in how that response takes place, then there are two key future extensions of research into faith and volunteering.

First, there is a need to explore broader conceptualisations of Christian faith beyond the categorisations of social action and evangelism as explored by Cloke et al. (2012). I discussed in Chapter Six how the mix of volunteers at Lunch was limited in terms of people predominantly worshipping at Church of England churches and who did not understand acting out their faith in terms of evangelism. There are questions to be asked, then, over different faith positions and volunteering, both in terms of motivation, and on the impact upon the food provision. For example, how do different Christian faith positions affect who food is given to? Do people aim to distribute food unconditionally? How do performances of faith play out in volunteering if people's understanding of faith is through a non-denominational church compared to, say, an Anglican or Methodist church? Then, turning these questions

around, what is the impact of volunteering upon a person's faith? Affect theory has given an understanding of persistence in volunteering in terms of a process of motivation, action, and reflection where people are affected by their volunteering experiences. It would be a natural extension of this research, then, to question how volunteering over a longer period of time might impact upon a person's understanding of their faith.

Secondly, whilst research has focussed on Christian faith groups' responses to food poverty, people of other religious faiths also respond to food poverty. However, the responses of other religious faiths has received little attention both in research, policy work of the APPG Hunger and Feeding Britain, and in the media. There are hesitant suggestions that the work of Muslim charities is less widely publicised by these charities than Christian groups' food poverty responses because of Islam encouraging humility (APPG British Muslims, 2017). Exploring multi-faith responses to food poverty is therefore necessary to develop a fuller picture of the situation around UK food poverty, and would provide the opportunity to take further the ideas around post-secular rapprochement. The significance of understanding multi-faith voluntarism also extends further than this: in the context of religious extremism it is more important than ever to understand, both in research and public discourse, how people of different faiths are motivated to act and to respond to people in need (McCabe et al., 2016).

## 6.2. *Who is Excluded in Faith-based Responses to Food Poverty?*

In both research and policy making, the state of UK food poverty is often referenced through the number of people using food banks, particularly through the Trussell Trust's statistics (for example APPG Hunger, 2015; Garthwaite, 2016). However, Trussell Trust food banks place restrictions upon the number of times a person can access food, and not everyone experiencing food poverty will access a food bank. An estimated 13% of adults in Great Britain were anxious about having enough to eat in 2016, but only 2% accessed a food bank (Denning and Buckingham, 2017). If we are to truly understand the scale of UK food poverty, then we need to understand this gap between people experiencing anxiety about having enough food, and people accessing a food bank. There is a question, then, in both volunteer and service-user contexts, when the majority of food banks are faith-based, over who is excluded in faith-based responses to food poverty.

In terms of volunteers, unlike Lunch in this research, some faith-based projects will make it a requirement that volunteers are of that faith. What are the implications of this for post-secularity, and the potentially missed opportunity of post-secular rapprochement where

people could learn more about each other's beliefs through acting together (Cloke and Beaumont, 2012; Cloke, 2015)? Alternatively, does a mix of volunteers with and without religious faith impact upon how people perform their faith through volunteering?

In the service-user context, Power et al. (2017a; 2017b) in their case study of Bradford suggest that people of ethnic minorities are less likely to use a food bank. Is this because they experience less food poverty, or is there a barrier in accessing a faith-based food bank? Ultimately, broadening the questions that we ask about faith-based responses to food poverty and how they are used is important in order to develop a fuller understanding of UK food poverty, and in practice terms, to understand how best to eliminate hunger.



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## Appendices

### Appendix One: Number of Days that Lunch Opened

School holiday	Number of days open
Summer holiday 2015	18
October half term 2015	3
Christmas holiday 2015	1
February half term 2016	3
Easter holiday 2016	3
May half term 2016	3
Summer holiday 2016	12
<i>Total number of days open:</i>	43

### Appendix Two: Details of Volunteers who Wrote Solicited Diaries

Volunteer pseudonym	Diary duration	Volunteer's positionality			
		Came to volunteer...	Gender	Employment status	Age bracket
Nora	Summer 2015 February 2016 Easter 2016 Summer 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Employed	26-65
Olivia	Summer 2015	From Lunch host church	Female	Student	25 or younger
Violet	Summer 2015 October 2015 February 2016 Easter 2016 May 2016 Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
Jack	Summer 2015	From another church	Male	Retired	Over 65
Alice	Summer 2015	From nearby area	Female	Student	26-65
Alexandra	Summer 2015	From nearby area	Female	Student	25 or younger
Elena	Summer 2015	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
Tony	Summer 2015 October 2015 Christmas 2015	From another church	Male	Retired	Over 65

	February 2016 Easter 2016 May 2016 Summer 2016				
Sadie	Summer 2015	From another church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Camilla	Summer 2015 February 2016 May 2016 Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
Charlotte	Summer 2015 February 2016	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
Amelia	October 2015 Christmas 2015 February 2016 Summer 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Not in paid employment	26-65
Nathan	February 2016	From nearby area	Male	Student	25 or younger
Lila	Easter 2016 May 2016 Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
George	May 2016	My relative	Male	Student	25 or younger
Julia	Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Jasmine	Summer 2016	From nearby area	Female	Student	26-65
Clara	Summer 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Bella	Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Henry	Summer 2016	From another church	Male	Employed	26-65
Susan	Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Sue	Summer 2016	From nearby area	Female	Student	25 or younger
Jennifer	Summer 2016	From another church	Female	Unknown	26-65
Eli	Summer 2016	From another church	Male	Employed	26-65
Caleb	Summer 2016	From nearby area	Male	Student	25 or younger
Lauren	Summer 2016	From nearby area	Female	Student	25 or younger
Maria	Summer 2016	From nearby area	Female	Employed	26-65
Caroline	Summer 2015	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65

### Appendix Three: Details of Volunteers Who Were Interviewed

Volunteer pseudonym	Interview date	Volunteer's positionality			
		Came to volunteer...	Gender	Employment status	Age bracket
Luke	February 2016	From Lunch host church	Male	Employed	25 or younger
Charlotte	March 2016	From another church	Female	Employed	26-65
Paul	March 2016	From Lunch host church	Male	Employed	26-65
Mark	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Male	Employed	26-65
James	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Male	Employed	25 or younger
Clara	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Olivia	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Student	25 or younger
Mia	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Student/unemployed	25 or younger
Kaylee	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Student	25 or younger
Ella	August 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Employed	26-65
Daniel	September 2016	From another church	Male	Employed	26-65
Sophia	September 2016	From another church	Female	Not in paid employment	26-65
William	September 2016	From another church	Male	Employed	26-65
Amelia	September 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Not in paid employment	26-65
Grace	September 2016	From another church	Female	Retired	Over 65
Sarah	September 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Employed	26-65
Anna	October 2016	From Lunch host church	Female	Employed	26-65
Leah	September 2016	From another church	Female	Retired	26-65

## **Appendix Four: Basic Interview Questions**

1. Motivation for becoming involved in Lunch in the summer
  - a. Personal reason?
  - b. Impact of others?
  - c. Feeling of duty?
2. Reflection on Lunch after the summer
  - a. Was it what you expected?
  - b. Did you want to be involved with it again?
3. Motivation for volunteering again at [February] half term
  - a. Any different to the summer?
4. Impact upon yourself of volunteering at Lunch
  - a. Generally
  - b. Upon your faith
5. Does it make a difference Lunch runs at [Lunch host church]?
  - a. In a church compared to other/non-faith groups?
  - b. Compared to other churches?
  - c. In sustaining the project?
6. The volunteer team
  - a. Does it feel like a team?
  - b. Mix of volunteers – faith, churches, backgrounds, ages
  - c. The project's future – change since the summer?

## **Appendix Five: Transcription Key (adapted from Silverman, 1993 cited in Kitchen and Tate, 2000, 238)**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
((pause))	Long pause
( )	Speech unidentifiable from recording
(word)	Speech unclear, bracketed words thought to have been said
((word))	Researcher description
=	No gap in conversation or talking over each other



## **Appendix Six: Example of Interview Transcription, 19/02/2016**

*Interviewer: What was your motivation for becoming involved in Lunch in the summer?*

Interviewee: Hmm. A combination of factors I guess. I had a long summer of with not a huge amount to do - not a huge amount structured to do in terms of work for my course or anything like that. So that was a good thing. Because I'm going to become a vicar and I'm looking to work in areas particularly like [area anonymised], I think it was important for me to experience that, to see something set up from the beginning. And also to just get stuck in and see what it looks like practically, have a chat with the kids and so that was important as well. I knew the kids from the youth group which again was part of training to be a vicar, and so another chance to build up those relationships and really keep showing God's love to them and just because it's the school holidays it doesn't mean we're not thinking of them, not caring for them. And just because I think it's a really good project and it's important that we can feed kids who are on free school meals, that needs people to happen.

*Would you say then that there was any = do you think if you hadn't been training for a vicar was there a sense = I don't want to put words into your mouth but do you think there was a sense of duty in a way? A sense of expectation?*

Only that I put upon myself. There wasn't a kind of duty in the sense that because I'm going to be a vicar I feel like this is the sort of thing that I should be doing. I guess I saw it more as an opportunity as a way of putting my faith into practice. If it was a duty it was a kind of loving duty if that makes sense? I think if I'd been a regular Christian in a pew and I had that time over the summer it's something I'd have thought about doing anyway because I genuinely enjoy youth work.

*Reflecting on how the summer went, was it what you expected?*

I don't know quite what I expected!

*Maybe I should have asked that first!*

Yeah, I don't know. I think it did surprise me that it took longer to get off the ground than I thought. I'd have thought there would be a huge need for that in the community, and actually we are seeing that now later on that we are getting fuller and more kids are coming. But I think that it surprised me how few kids we had initially.

*Why do you think that was?*

A fear of something new in the community potentially. I know it was fairly well advertised but people live fairly chaotic lives in [area anonymised] so letters out through the school are probably going to get lost or the kids aren't going to pass the message onto their parents necessarily. The kind of chaotic life factor is quite big and I think that could be a real issue. And I think potentially as well something about coming into a church can put people off. Even though it was explicit there was no particular kind of emphasis behind it the fact that was in church is naturally going to make people wary of what it was.

*One of the other volunteers from half term commented actually that there is a big Muslim population in [area anonymised] but we haven't had any Muslim children at Lunch which I think is something to build on but it's difficult to know how to go about that.*

Interestingly I had a visit to a mosque yesterday as part of my course up on the [anonymised] Road and they are a Pakistani Muslim community at that mosque. And someone was chatting to one of the leaders at the mosque and they said the Somali Muslim community doesn't even come to contact with them as Pakistani Muslims up the road. They're don't really seem to do a huge amount anyway, even with people from Islam.

*Okay, even harder then=*

=Yeah exactly, I think it may be even harder for them to cross the threshold. I think they're still a young community so they're even less likely to be used to the British culture.

*Something to work on, longer term I think.*

Yeah definitely.

*So after the summer did you feel like Lunch was something you wanted to be involved with again?*

Specifically at [Lunch host church]?

*Not necessarily.*

I think MakeLunch is a great idea and I think it's an important way as a church that we can demonstrate God's love practically and actually it's a great way of getting people into the sphere of the church if that makes sense. Not necessarily as a kind of we want to evangelise them and preach to them, but to show them that we're normal people, that's it's okay to come into a church. And practically its helps parents out and gives kids a hot meal which is really, really great. So it's something I'd think about doing in a future church definitely.

*Okay, but maybe not so much at [Lunch host church]? I won't be offended!*

((both laugh)) No I think I would want to do it again at [Lunch host church] because I think it'd be interesting seeing it, particularly over the summer a year on. Even over half term just one day was interesting as well to see the dynamic has shifted and the group of kids that we have now is very different from the initial group that we had were connected to the church already in one way or another.

*((Explain Polish families go to the toddler group))*

*So I emailed you about volunteering at February half term.*

Yep

*What was your, I mean presumably there was some kind of motivation as you said yes - or you were fed up of me bothering you! One of the two! But was your motivation the same or had it changed do you think?*

Yeah I think it was the same motivation. ((pause)) Half term is a good break for me from college stuff so actually having a few hours doing that is a good way of spending it. It means that I then don't feel guilty about working - I feel that can be my down time and then doing some kind of academic work for the rest of the day is fine. I've had a productive day in many ways. So that was helpful.

*What would you say, or has there been an impact upon yourself of volunteering at Lunch?*

In terms of what, anything, any kind of impact?

*Yeah well generally and also has there been an impact upon your faith as well?*

I don't think it's impacted my faith. Probably because actually there's not a huge - beyond the underlying reasons of why we do it there's no kind of mention of God explicitly. And so it doesn't have an impact in that way. I think it's helped me see what life is like a bit more - particularly seeing the Polish community this time around - and seeing how they clearly know each other well. Seeing how they are a community within a community in [area anonymised]. And that's helped my understanding of what it's like living in a place like [area anonymised].

*I guess we've kind of touched on this a bit but do you think it makes a difference that Lunch runs at [Lunch host church]? I guess both to yourself and to the children that are coming, and to their parents. So that's three different factors.*

If there was something similar at the community centre in [area anonymised] and it was advertised through church I'd probably feel bit less willing, not less willing, I'd feel like there was less need to go along because there'd be a wider community of volunteers to draw upon maybe. Because I'm aware of what [Lunch host church] is like and basically how few people there are involved that makes me more willing to do things. So it's important in that sense. I think it's important from a kind of honesty point of view. We're not hiding the fact that we're doing this because we're Christians and I think if you did it in a, if the church ran it in a community hall down the road I think you're being a little bit more dishonest about the reasons behind it. And I think it's good for [Lunch host church] to have people coming in who don't normally come into the church. So [child] for example came to Lunch in the summer and he and his Dad come to church each week now and have been drawn into the community at [Lunch host church] which is fantastic. So I think it's important from that point of view. And the church is funding it as well so there's that kind of openness of this is who we are and this is why we're doing it. I don't think it matters hugely for the kids. I guess the thing about doing it in the church is you've got people like [Lunch host church children's workers] who are experienced youth workers who can help do it. And that potentially makes a difference in terms of play and putting on activities. Which you wouldn't normally get in a secular organisation. You might get people who are good at working with kids but who it's not their job. Whilst doing it as a church it's seen as part of the church and therefore we can justify using people who are paid as youth workers as part of it.

*If maybe some people don't come because it's in a church, do you think then it would be better to do something in a more neutral space?*

I think in a place like [area anonymised] the need is always going to outstrip supply potentially. It always takes time for things to get off the ground. But in such a dense population with it being the place that it is I think the fact that we are doing something is important. I guess you've got to take it in baby steps and if we found we were over-subscribed every holiday or even that we were constantly under subscribed then you'd have to start thinking about can we do this in partnership with the local mosque or community centre down the road to see if we can make it a bigger thing. That might be somewhere it goes in the future but initially there is something to be said for keeping it in one organisation I think. Even from a structural point of view to make it easier.

*And do you think it makes a difference that it's at [Lunch host church] in terms of the sustainability of the project?*

I'd like to think so. Sustainability of the project depends on people being around who are around. So are [Lunch host church children's workers] going to stay at [Lunch host church] when their courses are finished? Where are you going to go when you've done your PhD, are you going to go anywhere? [Lunch host church priest] leaving will obviously make a difference. I think it's more likely to survive people moving away being in a church because there's always a structure of things going on. So although [Lunch host church priest] is leaving the PCC are in charge of the church, particularly the church wardens and if the PCC thinks it's important to carry on then it will carry on. And you're always going to have a fairly healthy volunteer base to draw upon because of that. But it would depend on the new vicar I guess. If we had a new vicar that came in with other ideas of how to run things in the summer, it would be fairly easy for him to say we're not going to do MakeLunch we're going to something different, depending how MakeLunch is going. Because I guess some vicars could see things as, in terms of impact of numbers is this impacting only a small number of people and could we impact more people by doing something different? And might have less hold over MakeLunch is an important concept.

*Do you think it makes a difference that it's at [Lunch host church] compared to other churches? In the area or just in general?*

I think it means every church is going to do it differently. I can imagine for example that a church with a more elderly population being very welcoming and very loving but not necessarily being great with the kids if they didn't have a dedicated youth worker. I can imagine a bigger church doing it in a bigger way and being able to reach more kids because of that. [Lunch host church] is building up its kids and youth work at the moment and in 5

years' time if MakeLunch started at [Lunch host church] I would imagine they'd have more contacts in the local schools and more contact with local kids and it'd be a bit easier to pull in some kids. And I think with [Lunch host church] you've got a very eclectic group of people who are stubbornly for [area anonymised] and so there's a kind of sheer bloody mindedness that this is going to happen. And people pulling in favours, and daughters and friends and people to come and help them so that probably helps. But I don't know other churches in the area particularly.

*Do you think the congregation generally have got behind the project?*

I feel like at [Lunch host church] generally there is a small number of people who do a large number of jobs. And I think that's an issue in many churches. I think it's particularly acute at [Lunch host church], partly because people who come to [Lunch host church] are quite vulnerable and so need a lot of care a lot of the time. So you do tend to see the same kind of people doing the same kind of things. So in that sense no because I don't think it's drawn in necessarily people who weren't already volunteering at one way or another at [Lunch host church]. On the other hand I do feel like they've supported it. It's always come up at the services and people do talk about it. That hasn't necessarily been much practical help from them but that doesn't mean it hasn't been on their minds.

*I think from my point of view it's difficult to tell. I haven't been to any other services so what I see of the church is the youth work so I don't know how many people I haven't met. It's the same people I see in different areas of the youth work. But I did get the general impression that people liked it. But then at half term the coffee morning ladies were really not very pleased that we were going into their room and they had to finish, even though that's when they finish anyway. And there was quite a lot of grumbling going on, like who are these people? And then I was like oh maybe it's not as=*

=I'm not sure how many of the coffee morning ladies come on a Sunday morning.

*Oh really?*

There's a few sort of core, but my experience of coffee morning is there are a lot who don't come to the service on a Sunday morning. So they are part of the church in that they come on a Wednesday but they're not part of the core congregation on a Sunday.

*I suppose that's a complexity of an area like [area anonymised]. Maybe the parents whose children who come to Lunch might consider themselves as part of the church in some sense, but if you define it as how many come on a Sunday. Because there's quite a lot of different=*

=well I think one the big bug bears that we have as students with [Lunch host church] is that there's not actually a huge amount of discipleship of faith going in. In terms of we're not sure how much people are really encouraged to grow in their faith. Which would include actually movements towards social action and being more practical rather than just turning up on a Sunday. And so part of that is part of the frustration with coffee morning or youth group or whatever, that actually a lot of the time we are doing a very incarnational model of ministry where we are alongside people, we're helping them out but actually we're not pushing them forwards in their faith and walk with Jesus. I think there's an interesting tension there because potentially if you had a stronger sense of discipleship of Jesus you'd get more people from the core congregation coming and volunteering.

*So thinking about the volunteer side of it specifically. Do you think it feels like a team?*

Yes for me. Mostly because I know most of the people there at [Lunch host church]. So I don't know how it would feel for someone coming from the university say coming just for MakeLunch. Over the summer it was a bit harder as well I think because the team was chopping and changing each day. Which was partly to do with people working and people being available at different times etc. so there's not a huge amount you can do about that. But it does make it more difficult to have a core theme going through. So yeah on the day we worked together well but it's only if we kept doing it for a few years and the same people kept volunteering then you'd get to know them well and regularly.

*With the mix of volunteers - although actually I don't know how much of a mix you saw on the days that you've been there - so overall we've had about 40 different people that have come from different churches, different backgrounds. Some of faith, some not of faith, and different ages as well. Do you think, what impact do you think that has, have you seen much of that and has it made an impression upon you?*

I think it's been great that people, what struck me particularly was chatting to some of the university volunteers and it's a little out of town=

=*They didn't come back last week!*

Well we had a couple of new ones didn't we?

*Yeah but the girl you met was meant to come again Thursday and she didn't come back. Don't know if that impacts what you were going to say!*

Ah okay. Well I was going to say that I think it's great that they did come and volunteer and they spent time doing that. Particularly, I got the impression a lot of them didn't have a faith particularly and were driven by ideas of social justice so particularly coming to a church environment where it's likely that people are going to know each other could have been quite intimidating. So I was impressed by that. And I thought they got stuck in very well. It does change the dynamic I guess, not in a bad way, it just gives it a different feel.

*What having a mix of Christians and people who aren't Christian?*

Yeah I think so.

*In what sort of ways?*

Not in a negative way. For example if everyone was a Christian it would be easier to say before the kids arrive, let's pray.

*I did mean to do that but there wasn't time.*

Yeah it was rushing around. But that came be a bit trickier if there are non-Christians around. But the conversations that they have with the kids will be different I imagine. Again that's not a bad thing, they're just different. So I think it's important particularly for a church like [Lunch host church] where volunteer numbers are going to be low to get people in from elsewhere. And it'd be the same for people from different churches they don't necessarily know the ethos at [Lunch host church], they don't know the kids so well. So they're going to act differently probably to how we're going to react. So they're going to act differently because we know a bit more what they're like and the normal chaos that goes on at [Lunch host church]!

*You said about different conversations with the kids. How does your faith make an impact upon the conversations you have?*



I always have some interesting questions, particularly with the older kids it tends to start off with what do you do or what are you doing at the moment? And that naturally leads to some interesting conversations. I wouldn't say I steer the conversation towards God but it's going to be more natural for me to talk about God without it being weird.

*When you say older what do you mean by older?*

So for example the kids at the youth group on a Wednesday, the year 8 and 9s and year 10s as well. And the older kids in the primary school age so years 5 and 6 as well. Not that the others wouldn't be able to talk about God but they're probably having so much fun that it doesn't really come across to them to think about that.

*Final question. With regards to Lunch's future do you think that the prospects have changed since the summer to now?*

Yeah possibly. It's going to be different with [Lunch host church priest] not around because he does hold things together a bit at [Lunch host church] so that will be an interesting dynamic, and [Lunch host church children's workers] will probably end up stepping up a bit more with youth work and kids' stuff. Which is great and what should be happening anyway in terms of delegation. Having more kids at February half term was exciting which helps it keep going. I guess we've got limited funding haven't we so=

*= funding is not really an issue. One of the grants we've got has to be spent by May and we still have £600 left. We started with £4000 or £5000 which when I applied was enough for 3 or 4 years was the plan.*

Yeah okay but beyond that either the church would have to step up donation or we apply for grants and things like that. I guess it'd be a bit easier to apply for grants now because we do have a track record and experience in developing with kids so that would be a positive. And also [Lunch host church] is growing. It's definitely growing. It's not growing ridiculously quickly but it is growing and that will hopefully increase the volunteer base as well which would be helpful. I always think the trickiest thing with a project is when you start it up and keeping the momentum going. So I guess as long as we had a good summer the long term prospects would be fairly good because you're going to start being able to draw in more people and more resources from elsewhere as more people get to know of it.

## Appendix Seven: Lunch Registration Form (With Initial Research Consent)

<i>Name of Child</i>	
<i>Date of Birth</i>	
<i>Name of Parent/Guardian</i>	
<i>Address and postcode</i>	
<i>Mobile number</i>	
<i>Emergency Contact Name</i>	
<i>Relationship To Child</i>	
<i>Contact Number</i>	
<p><i>Does your child suffer from any medical conditions, food allergies or dietary requirements?</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please detail)      <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p><i>Is your child on any medication? (We are unable to administer any medication so please ensure that any medication is administered before attending the Lunch Club)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please detail)      <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p><i>I give consent for my child's photo to be used in promoting and presenting on the Lunch Club and MakeLunch locally and nationally (please note these photos may be seen by the public):</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes      <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p><i>I give consent for my child to make their own way home at the end of the Lunch Club:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes      <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	
<p><i>Please provide us with any additional information that we should be aware of:</i></p>	
<p><b>Consent:</b> I agree for the above named child to take part in the activities of Lunch. I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the above named child does not suffer from any medical condition or food allergies other than those listed above. Should I become aware of any I will inform the Club before they attend.</p> <p>I understand that Lunch accepts no responsibility for loss, damage or injury caused by or during attendance at any of the activities except where loss, damage or injury can be shown to result directly from the negligence of Lunch.</p> <p>Lunch forms part of Stephanie Denning's PhD at the University of Bristol in Geography on faith-based social action. If appropriate I will be asked for permission at a later stage for my child to participate directly in the research – participation will be optional and not necessary to attend Lunch.</p>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## Appendix Eight: Letter Written to Parents/Guardians for Consent to Use Photographs of Their Children in the Research



16<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **LUNCH PHOTO PERMISSION REQUEST**

I have been co-ordinating [name and location of Lunch] as part of my university research on faith-based volunteering.

On Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August I took some photographs of the children which I would like to use to illustrate my research writing, in presentations and in reports. The photographs will be seen by academics and the general public, including through the internet.

**If you are happy for photographs of your child(ren) to be used please sign and return this form in the included envelope by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.** If you do not give permission the images of your child(ren) will be blurred so they are not identifiable.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to email me at [stephanie.denning@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:stephanie.denning@bristol.ac.uk)

Many thanks,

Stephanie Denning  
*Lunch co-ordinator (2015-16), University of Bristol PhD student*

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I give permission for photographs of my child(ren)]  
..... taken on 23<sup>rd</sup> August at  
[location] to be used in Stephanie Denning's academic research as described above.

Your name: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....